THE SOUL OF INDIA

(A collection of essays giving a bird's eye view
of the Indian culture from the Vedas
down to the present times.)

By

DR. MATILAL DAS, M. A. B. L, Ph. D.

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Preface

These short studies on the cultural glories of India have been the result of researches extending over many years. They are written for the general reader and some of them were read over in different universities and cultural centres of Europe and America and a few are based on lectures delivered by the author in different places.

This book will give the intelligent reader a full picture of Mother India and a true import of her manysided achievements. Those who want to learn and master the rich heritage of India should read more authoritative books on India.

This tiny volume will serve its purpose, if it can awaken in its readers a sincere love for India, a genuine passion for her unique culture and civilisation and a desire to know more and more about her noble legacy.

30th June, 1958.
Calcutta.

Matilal Das

To

My Mother

whose infinite love and fond affection

have been

the source of profound inspiration

and

limitless aspirations.

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The Soul of India

To the people of the West, the inhabitants of India are altogether incomprehensible. There is no doubt, on the remote back ground, the bond of race and language, but it is too remote and between the two, the Eastern wing and the Western wing of the great Caucasian race, there is a wide gulf of difference in out-look and temperament.

It would be profitable for foreigners to analyse and understand the national traits of India,for only by sympathetic appreciation of others, we can bring about that desired-for goal, the federation of the races, in bonds of fellow-feeling and love.

India is a vast continent Her snow-clapped mountains, her arid deserts, her verdant plains are the homes of many peoples, many languages and varied cultures. But behind this variety,behind these apparent divergences, there runs an undercurrent of life-force, which gives to the Indian civilization, a fundamental unity.

The civilizations of Greece, Rome, Egypt, Assyria and Babylon are gone. Dead is Greece and dead are her Gods The power of Rome is a chapter of History. Egypt lives in her mummies and pyramids Assyria and Babylon are forgotten. But India lives and there is a wonderful unity, in her movement through the centuries of glory and sorrow.

What is this power ? What is this driving force ? The foreigner is amazed by the diversity of India and fails therefore to see the continuity and unity of Indian culture India is living, and complex and intricate have been her activities in the different ages, but throughout them, her personality has been the same.

This is essentially an attitude towards life In her forest homes, she seers tried to prove the mysteries of life and solve the problems of humanity. They felt that the path of material glory, the path of conquest and achievements lead to evanescent results They searched and searched and discovered in a flight of inspiration, that there is an abiding joy, behind the phenomena of life. The Upanishads says, "Who would have desired for life, if the joy of life did not pervade the whole of infinite space?" This was a discovery, far greater in import and significance, than that of Columbus or any other epoch making discoverer

It explained the highest truths of life Life is movement and progress, but it remains meaningless, unless it can be co-ordinated with the larger movement of universal life. This larger Life is not a void and is not a mirage but rather its rhythm and harmony, gives meaning and purpose to the life of the Individual.

The struggle and strife of life would be unbearable, if a greater idea and meaning does not await its end Fight is life, only when in fighting, we realise the greatness and goodness of our inner self. The burden and misery of humanity, when placed on the back ground of a divine mission, does not stagger us, but rather gives us courage and vitality to face it bravely. Combat with evil is possible, only when we are assured, that victory would gain us infinite bliss.

The steadfast faith in the transcendental source of life and humanity has been alike her power and weakness. It has saved India from extinction. Her glory is gone, her triumphant achievements in arts and crafts are little known, her peoples are decadent and her culture is on the back ground. But still India lives There is the stir of a new life—there are signs of a returning glory and the hopes are that she would win her rightful place in the federation of nations

This she will do, not by aping the west, but by pinning her faith on the pristine purity of her ancient culture. The exaltation and consecration of spirit is not an abstract theory, but had been a concrete reality with India. The supreme truth of the ever-progressive humanity lies in a true realisation of this ancient message and India must rise up with the ancient faith, for the deliverance of the world. But the life of God-consciousness is not a life of inactivity. It is not a life of inaction and idle detachment. India, in her period of glory, when she envisaged this truth of abiding reality, did not live a life of dreams. Her spirituality blossomed forth into an energy, that covered the many-sided activities of life It brought forth the best of literary works, its life-force pulsated in the ancient philosophy and inspired the sculpture and architecture of India. It was at the basis of its wonderful social structure and in its unique solutions of economic problems of the community. It was the secret of her chivalry and heroism. It sustained the enduring vitality of her culture and renewed and revived her, through the periods of storm and stress. In short, it is the pivot upon which her civilization stands, a civilization that is grand in its outlines, unique in its perfection of details and immortal in its virility.

India to-day is shorn of her ancient glory. Her culture is no longer animated with the ever-fresh vitality of a

living organism. Her culture is no longer in full touch with complete life, economical, intellectual, aesthetic, social and spiritual, so that her lamp of life burns dim in her lone cottage.

But still the lamp burns and we must join the festival of world illumination, with this lamp of our own. There are some shortsighted men in India, who fondly believe that our Indian culture is the best in the world and it must remain isolated in its pristine purity, out of the polluted touch of the world.

This is a suicidal policy and this exclusiveness has been the cause of her ruin. The Indian seers faced the problems of life—they arrived at certain solutions and we may be justly proud for them. But blind faith is blind—it does not lead. Our solutions have been different from those of Europe. But so long India was alive, the truths were learnt afresh by fresh experiences and they were adjusted with the times and environments.

India to day must follow this ancient method. She must move with the procession of life—she must join hands with the peoples of the world and win love and fellowship of others by exchange of goodwill. The day has dawned for universal brotherhood. The day has dawned for universal peace and joy. It would be by union of different cultures of the past, with the faith and knowledge of the living present. India must join this federation. She would try, with her broad outlook and catholicity, for co ordination of the cultures of the world, where each will give to and take from the others.

But what can India give and what can the world take from India? The world needs the spiritual assurance of India. The theory of universal mechanism, which rationalist thinkers

have built upon the general results of the sciences, cannot satisfy the real and philosophical needs of the soul. Our modern life is steeped to the core in the spirit of inevitable rationalism. This intense intellectualism reigns everywhere, but it does not bring the joy that we need—the harmony that can soothe the soul. Science is alive, it extends its domain farther and farther every day and with it rationalism, the very soul of science, spreads far and wide and captures the hearts of people.

Modern materialism is crushing humanity. It requires renovation by the effort of a spiritual renaissance. India is able to bring the influence of her age-long spiritual culture for this transformation.

Life is a mystic reality. It develops and unfolds itself, when it is linked with the higher spirit of God. Life should be a discipline for divine effusion. This mystic illumination must penetrate the reality of every-day life Life should know the harmony which would bring a sense of organised unity—the harmony of inner reality, which inspires and verifies. This message of spiritual life—this gospel of God-consciousness is India's own and it is through it and through it alone, that mankind as a whole will find the key to its re-birth. The weary world is in sore need of this magnetism of Indian thought.

But this mission of India should not be towards emasculation of the world. To India and India alone, has the task been entrusted to guard the sacred fire of spirit, from extinction, during the long night of darkness and materialism. India should fulfil her mission now, by spreading the message of full life, which blossoms forth out of the deepest spiritual roots.

In the days of her glory, her spiritual force was beautifully wedded to practical vitality—and there was a total synthesis of all the forces and possibilities of life The world should know that India is not the land of mysticism alone—it was the home of arts and industries, which are still the wonder of the world Humanity should combine the introvert nature of India, with the overflowing vitality of the west and out of this fusion, there would come a new fire, which would revolutionize the world

India may be called the soul of mankind, because in the consciousness of India, the soul represents the deepest reality. India never lives in the moment actuated by primitive impulses The outsider therefore feels that there is no joy and gaiety among the people But it is not so There is really an absence of effusion of the impulsive life, but there is the calmness of an abiding joy.

India has been the laboratory of the world in matters of religion Divergent faiths have met on the soils of India and there have been experiments of different religious disciplines To India, religion has never been a matter of speculation, it has been ever a thing of the life. To this laboratory of religious experience, humanity must come for light and guidance

India does not stand behind the other nations of the world, in worldly pomp and glory. She is not rich in material achievements, but the nation which cares more for things of the spirit, than things of the world, which cares more about spiritual seeking than about material gains, is doing greater work for humanity than any other The fountain source of this spiritual realisation is not dry It springs up even now, here and there, in different provinces of India and brings forth from time to time,great stirring souls, who realise the harmony of the unity, that underlies the grandeur of the phenomenal world.

The soul of India lives in her complex culture. Her Upanishadas are the highest embodiments of philosophic endeavour. There is a beauty and a grandeur all its own about these sacred writings. The ultimate according to it is the light in which all that is perceived is seen but there is no light by means of which it can be seen

The monistic idealism which holds that the abiding goal of life is to know the impermanence and evanescence of all else other than Brahma and which asks for the attainment of the identity of one's own soul, with the great soul in which all else lives and moves and has its being is the wonder of ages. Buddhism, with its lofty ethical idealism, has quite a modern note Buddhism, the religion of love, can offer a solace to the world that is shivering in the nightmare of war.

The poems of Kalidas and others are perennial sources of delight. Her sculpture and architecture have a compelling appeal Her life-force is evident in its manifold variety, in the manysided activities of Indian civilization.

We are optimists. We believe in a great future, for humanity. Every action of ours to-day is surely helping to mould the nature and destiny of the coming future. We should therefore be catholic in outlook and liberal in our view-points.

A limitless contact with different peoples and nations would produce an internationalism of imagination which would bring up a humanity richer and broader in intellectual expansion and sweeter and nobler in spiritual and moral attainments. For this cultural renovation of the world, for this renewing of life, India would contribute perhaps the largest quota.

The treasure of beauty and spiritual wealth which India has been able to preserve, inspite of changes and revolutions

in her life would, when it is known in their completeness, shall have a winning universal acceptance.

There can be not the least doubt about the worth and value of Indian culture. It possesses a wonderful and secret power, which brought an influx of fresh energy in each age for its unbroken continuity.

This life-force is working to-day. Unseen the forces of truth and beauty are silently awaking in the midst of pessimism and darkness of the present years. A greater India must rise up with its noble heritage for the illumination of the world. The long night of unrest and unhappiness lies before mankind. India must bring spiritual food and must throw wide open the gates of love and bliss.*

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* This essay was written long before India became free. But what were written then are still true to-day. The author sees no reason for any change of the subject-matter, because of the attainment of Independance by India.

The Poetry of the Rigveda

The Rigveda is the earliest book of humanity. But the general approach to this monumental book is rather one-sided and wrong Bloomfield in his book, 'The Religion of the Veda' says :-Vedic literature, in its first intention is throughout religious or it deals with institutions that have come under the control of religion. It includes hymns, prayers and sacred formulas, offered by priests to the gods on behalf of rich lay sacrificers ; charms for witchcraft, medicine and other homely practices, manipulated by magicians and medical men, in the main for the plainer people'', This would give really a very inglorious picture to a literature which has been held in the very highest esteem by scholars and philosophers of India for long centuries. Our task in this brief essay is not to explore the religious mystic symbolism of the Vedic singers, whose revelations were the fountain sources of the elevated Upanishads , but to discuss the richness and beauty, the profundity and fervour of the Vedic hymns, merely as poems The strength of these lyrics and verses arises equally from an inward profundity and a rich sensuousness A poet is a seer. He sees deeper and finds the beauty and truth, which lie hidden from ordinary sight. The rhythm, that vibrates around us, the sweetness, that pervades the most common-place things of life are not felt by us, but a poet, with his far-seeing vision sees into the very life of things and speaks of the joy and de-

light he feels in emotional communion with the wonderful world of mind and matter.

But a mystic has a gift rarer even among the poets, who sing about life in words of beauty and rhythm. He sees into the inmost soul of life and nature, not by aesthetic feelings alone, but by developing his inner consciousness by some mysterious and unseen power It is difficult to tell much about this power, because it is an illumination which can be felt, but defies analysis and explanation The taste of sugar has a special quality which can be perceived only by tasting sugar It is so with mystic perception Unless you attune your mind to this out-look it is not, possible for you to grasp the mystic idea It is in essence a training of the heart, by which the ultimate truths of life, the basic principles of the world flash upon the pure mind, like the sudden flash of the dawn He feels them but is not in a position to make them pass the test of reason and logic

Mysticism is thus a particular method of the search for truth by which through intuition and deep vision we arrive at the fundamental truths of life. The Vedic poets are essentially mystics They have written in an atmosphere, surcharged with rites and rituals Their poetical images, their idioms and their form and colour are different and a modern man may find it difficult to go below the surface and understand the inner meaning and significance conveyed by the poems But it is not an insurmountable difficulty for one who seeks to go to the inward deeps of harmony, that is in the Vedic lyrics and poems

We must however bear in mind that the Rigveda is not the work of a single poet. It is an anthology of poems and its verses are heterogenous in character, containing different

strata of thoughts, though there is an underlying unity of purpose and outlook behind them.

It will not be possible to deal with the varied beauties of the hymns I shall give a few examples only. The following is heavenly in its delight, admirable in its loftiness and grand in its conception. It is the famous creation hymn, rich and valuable in its texture and idealism Deep submission to the mystery is felt expanding into prophetic utterance. Creation is best understood by the symbol of negation

"There was no life then, nor what is non-being. There was no atmosphere, nor the sky which is beyond What covered all this ? Where was it ? Who gave shelter ? Did it lie in the deep abyss of the waters ?

Neither death was there, nor immortality. Neither the light of day was, nor the night That one breathed by its inner power without breath, other than it there was nothing.

Darkness there was, at first hidden in darkness—it was a sea without light. All that was, was covered in a shell. That one was born in the great power of devotional fervour.

Desire arose in the beginning in that, it was the primal seed and germ of spirit

The sages searched in their heart and found by wisdom the root of being in non-being.

The ray which was stretched across—was it below or was it above the line that divides the upper and the lower worlds ?

There were both seed-bearers and there were mighty powers. Self-power was below and Will up yonder.

Who verily knows and who can proclaim whence it was born and whence comes this creation ? The gods came later than this creation. Who then knows whence it arose ?

He, the lord of creation, whether he made it or did not make it, whose eye controls this world in the highest heaven, he verily knows or perhaps he does not.

There are few poems in the literature of the world which can stand comparison with it for its super glory, its matchless diction and its philosophic depth The absolute reality which is behind the phenomena is beyond all human categories. It is only possible to speak and explain reality in terms which are vague and unmeaning to the uninitiated, but which has value to one who knows The word-music of the poem, its imaginative fervour, its sheer beauty and sweetness is lost in the translation The sob and surge of the eternal sea, the sound and sight of eternity weave a charm round this poem which is unique in its tone and grandeur

For inner light and spiritual discovery, the Prajapati hymn is no less important It is grand and for its elevating tone, it outdistances all rivals in the whole compass of Vedic literature. The accent is one of experience and wisdom

The poet is elevated by his unshirking acceptance He elevates our intellectual being It is at once human, happy and powerful

"A golden germ arose in the beginning. He was born, the only Lord of creatures He did establish the earth and the firmament. What God shall we adore with our oblation ?

He gives the vital breath. He gives power and vigour. He, whose behests all gods do acknowledge—the shadow of wh-

om is life immortal as well as death. What God shall we adore with our oblation ?

Who, by his grandeur, has become the sole king of the moving world that breathes and slumbers. He who controls both two footed and four-footed creatures. What God shall we adore with our oblation ? Through whose great might shine the snow-clapped mountains, whose are, they say, the ocean and the heavenly river. Whose arms are these—the directions of the space What God shall we worship with our oblation ?

By him the heavens are strong, by him the earth is steadfast. He supports the star-lit dome and the realm of light He who measures the world of ether in sky What God shall we revere with our oblation ?

Who is looked up for help by the trembling heart when battle is fought over it between powers of evil and good , when over it the risen sun shines in splendour. What God shall we worship with our oblation ?

When the mighty waters came with the universal germ and produced fire From the waters rose the One, the spirit of the gods What God shall we adore with our oblation ?

In his lone grandeur, he surveyed the waters that contained force and gave birth to sacrifice. He is the God of gods, the sole One. What God shall we worship with our oblation ?

Let him not harm us—the creator of the earth and the heaven. He who supports the Law He who created the ethereal sky and the moon. What God shall we worship with our oblation ?

Prajapati, thou art the only one and there is no other who comprehends all these created beings. Grant us our heart's

desire, when we worship thee. Give us life and light, the wealth of the world and of the spirit."

We are to read the poem with reverence and awe In it, we find that sense of mystery in the mind of man, which brings obstinate questionings. The mystical and metaphysical experience of the poet is felt in its subtle depth and poignancy by even the most casual reader

Let us turn from these songs of profound philosophy to some simple poems of everyday life, where the poets feel the beauty and joy of nature, with love and wonder. The poems on the dawn are remarkable for fine imagery and pleasing technique. Some of the phrases are atoms of inextinguishable thought and no lover of literature will fail to be charmed with their colour and liveliness I only select a short poem on the Dawn It is not the best of its kind, but its brevity only has let me to choose it.

"O thou beautiful dawn, come hither by auspicious ways,from above the golden realm of the bright sky.

Come thou on red steeds—come to the house of the devotees, who adore you with Soma juice.

Thy chariot, O lovely dawn, is fair of form and moves joyfully Come thou, daughter of the sky and help men who have achieved fame by deeds of glory

O thou bright dawn, when thy hour comes, men and cattle do stir in joy

And from all the quarters flock together the winged birds. Thou, when thou comest with thy golden beams, fillest the world with radiance and splendour.

The sons of Kanva invoke thee, for glory and joy and pour forth their fervour in sacred songs.

Like a child we travel into the fairy-land with the poet, who is not only a poet of imagination but is a poet of innocence. Like all fine poetry, it is a blessed union of images and music. We escape from the four walls which confine us in our little rooms and travel forth in a world of beauty and rhythm. Those who want to enjoy the superb skill of Vedic poets should read the longer poems on the dawn, which reach the height of poetical fancy by a close realization of the unearthly which is yet earth-twined and remarkably concrete.

The following hymn on night is equally beautiful in its symbolism and imaginative sensuousness.

> "With her shining eyes, the Goddess night looks forth and moves in many places.
>
> The void she fills, she fills height and depth—the immortal Goddess Her splendour covers the darkness. When she comes, she places her sister, the dawn in her place and so the darkness smiles on her. Just as birds rest on the tree, we tread on her pathways. O thou Goddess, give us shelter, this night. Those that live in village rest in homes, so do rest all that walk and all that fly, including the falcon, keen for his pray. Keep off the evil wolf and her dame, O thou moving night, keep the thief away. Let us have a peaceful time. She has come near to me, she that decks the dark night with richest hues. O thou dawn, cancel darkness like debts.
>
> O loving night, thou child of heaven, this is my offering to thee, like the land to the conquering hero—accept the same."

The description is vividly realized. The starlit night, the faded magic and music of the incoming dawn and the out-going

night are but living in images which are clear and obvious but none the less delightful for the same.

The hymn to the forest is marvellous for its grace and beauty. The poet says :—

"O thou wild forest, wild art thou, pathless thou roamest Why dost thou not seek the village. Art thou not afraid ? The bull roars somewhere, the cricket chirps Thou lady of the forest playest as it were on a harp The cattle graze yonder—there shines what seems to be a dwelling-house

At eve one hears the rattling sounds of carts. Here one calls his cow—there some one has felled a tree A dweller at eve fancies that a cry sings somewhere. She does not stay unless one goes with evil intent One can have sweet fruits and then can rest where he wills

O thou lady of the forest, accept my songs—thou sweet scented queen, redolent of blam. Thou art the mother of fawns Thou hast a rich store of food, though thou hast no tilling "

It is a pure nature-poem The bare simplicity of the poem is wedded to the immensity of imaginative fervour The appeal to senses of smeel, taste and touch is pre-eminently romantic and the poem stands the test of true creative art.

The hymn to the mother Earth makes us feel that we are looking at our known globe for the first time, with the wonder and joy of the first child on the face of the earth. It extends the boundaries of reality for us and reveals to us the significance and meaning of the known in words of music that are yet true and sincere.

"Verily thou, O mother Earth, bearest the burden of mountains. O thou mighty one, thou pourest forth torrents, who with might, quickenest the soil. O thou conqueror with love and power, to thee, O wanderer at will, we offer our songs at dawn of day. O thou shining one, thou drivest the gathering clouds like a neighing steed.

O thou firm one, thou graspest with thy face the lordly tree of forest, when from the lightning of thy cloud, the rains from the sky come down".

The naturalistic impressionism of the poem is interwoven with human emotions. The vital energy finds soft and lucid expression even in its brevity.

There are some ballads in the Rigveda, which cannot but fascinate even the most acute critics. Rich and sensuous, they inspire us with their beautiful strength, their terse and tense dialogues and their overwhelming human sympathy.

In the ballad of Yama and Yami, we find the earliest reference to erotic sentiments. But the sex-appeal and its ardent support by Yami does not cloud the mind of Yama. He concludes with a pious rebuke, which is characteristic of the Indian ideal of asceticism and renunciation.

"Embrace another, Yami, let another enfold thee, just as wood-bine clings round the tree.

Win thou his heart and let him win thy love. He shall have thus with thee, the most perfect union."

I shall conclude with the last hymn of the Rigveda, which is a clarion call to universal unity and shall have in these days of world-planning and internationalism, universal appeal.

"O thou mighty universal energy, bringest up the sumum bonum of our desires, love, will and power. Bring us life and light, as thou art enkindled in every house, for the sacrifice that goes on daily.

Let us assemble together, speak together, let us have one mind just as the mighty forces of nature move and act in law.

Let our goal be common, common the parliament, common be our desires, so would our efforts be joint.

A common ideal is before us all for our acceptance and let us fulfil it with common sacrifice.

Let our resolve be one and let our hearts be together Let us bring happiness and joy by uniting our thoughts and deeds. The Rigvedic poetry has a reserve of power and a depth of poetic radiance which being inward, penetrate to the dynamic centre of life. Picturesque many of them are, some are wild and uncouth, but there is something organic in the spirit and atmostphere of the poems which give a perfect poise and a noble serenity to them.

There are endless repetitions and they may tire many but this is inevitable, if we bear in mind the back ground of the poems

There is a blessed sanctity enclosing all the poems Our attention is drawn to the vast cosmic whole and it is idle to criticise them from our modern stand-point We should, on the other hand, try to understand them with deep humility and in order to attain the cosmic receptivity, needed for the realisation of their import, we must try to revive those days of passionate devotion and wonder.

The images and the symbols of the Vedic hymns are symbols of far-off days but they are full of ever-widening sense and harmony.

The Vedic hymns have a white purity round about them. They spring forth with a superb ease from the heart of the mystic bard. The diction is sometimes archaic, the meanings are at places obscure, but there is always the joy of creative urge in all of them.

There is a vigour, a dynamic force and a buoyant optimism in all through them They are the expressions of men to whom life was bright and joyous, who loved life in its fullness. Morbid pessimism is conspicuous by its absence.

Modern man may not enter into the keen religious fervency that projects itself into the composition of the poems, but there is no obstacle to the sincere lover of poetry to enjoy the burning sincerity of the uttarance, to appreciate the splendour and profoundly penetrating insight of the mighty singers and to revel in the grand festivity of supreme art-forms Those who are bold and would come forward, would find, after a study of the poems, that these hymns have forced their intuition into a newer world of beauty and joy, and have enabled them to help into the realms of the infinite and eternal.

The Vedic Ideal of Progress

The inner quest of India has been the quest of religion. But it may be said that the Vedas contain the quintessence of the Aryan research after the spirit They are the earliest records of humanity and all over India, they are venerated as revealed knowledge. They are the intuitive spiritual experiences of the Rishis, who are called seers, because they saw visions of spiritual things, as it were with their naked eyes But many a scholar, specially the Western savants have led many people to believe that the Vedic attitude towards life is not an affirmative attitude, but is rather the negative attitude of the individual to the world

According to this wrong conception, our religion is the religion of escapism We are afraid of this world. According to this negative philosophy of the Vedic religion, we believe that the existence of the material world is unreal, deceptive and transitory, and this has produced in us an other-worldliness, which has stopped the wheel of progress in India.

Progress is the key-note of modern civilisation Lord Halden has said that perfection is unattainable by mankind. Our goal is a never-ceasing pursuit, and we achieve the end of our quest not in attainment but it is being achieved in every moment of movement Life is thus a continuous speed, a never-ceasing movement. Just as the Sun on the horizon

recedes at greater distance as soon as we approach it, similary our ideal of perfection moves further and further from us, as we try to realise and reach it The ideal of human life, therefore, is not in a life of perfection but in a life of pursuit, in which perfection is being attained each moment, as we move on. One cannot but feel a great wonder, when one delves rightly into the mysteries of the Vedic lore, one finds that though preached nearly 6000 years ago, the Vedic seers were lovers of life and progress. The Vedic thought, when appreciated rightly, would look very modern to any ardent seeker.

The Vedic seers had a dynamic conception of life. Our adventurous forefathers did not look upon the life of the world as a life of dust, a life of sin and disgrace. That mean and narrow conception of renunciation which was once highly lauded as the highest attainment in human life was never glorified in the Vedic age. This forerunner of Indian culture did not want to die in this world of beauty and sweetness. They wanted to live more than hundred autumns, enjoying the fragrance and joys of the earth. This devotion to the mother-Earth, this natural love for the worries and cares of life, this ideal of enjoyment in work and play, this was really the Vedic outlook. I want to call this spirit of life for life, as the Vedic ideal of progress, and I would illustrate the same by reference to the Vedic hymns.

In the Rigveda, we find Rishi Vasistha praying to God—"we would look upon the Sun, bright in its lustre awakening every day before us in its ordained path. The eye of the firmament would live. We would see a hundred autumns and we would live a hundred autumns. This joyous hymn of Vasistha was expanded in the Yajurveda and we find there the Rishi praying in the following way .—"Yonder is the bright Sun, the Sun that rises in front, for the good of the world.

We would live a hundred autumns, we would see a hundred autumns But this would not be a life of inactivity and sloth. We would listen to great truths for these hundred autumns We would speak the great things for these hundred autnmns. We would not be lowly , but we would develop daily in the wealth of life and bliss, not only for a hundred autumns but for more than that. This prayer is not for a mere long life. The life that was demanded by the seers was a life of perfection that would grow daily in thoughts and ideals and that would enjoy truth, beauty and goodness in its daily movement.

This prayer was further developed in the Atharvaveda, where the sages pray, "Let us look into the beauty of a hundred autumns Let us live gaily for a hundred autumns Let us know for a hundred autumns and let us increase and develop for a hundred autumns We must attain new things every day. We must be for a hundred autumns and we must grow for a hundred autumns, nay for more than a hundred autumns."One can compare these beautiful hymns for a long and growing life, with the utterances of our modern Poet Rabindranath, who also has written that he does not want salvation by renunciation. He wants to see good in all the activities of this world

This love for sweetness and culture is also to be found in many other beautiful lyrics I would only quote two fine lyrics by a sage Gotama Rahugana. In one he prays :-

> "Let the wind waft sweetness. Let the rivers sprinkle sweetness Let the vegetables be full of honey Let our nights be nights of joys Let our days be days of happiness Let even the common dust beneath our feet, be full of honey and joy and let the great firmament produce veneration and joy in us. Let the trees be full of honey. Let the Sun spread sweetness all around and let the directions be full of honey".

In another hymn he prays...

"We would listen to what is good and what is sweet with our ears. We would see what is just and pure and with bodies made strong by exercise and worshipping gods, we would live a life which is dedicated to the cause of divine manifes tation"

But let us not think for a moment that the Rishis were oblivious to the worries and cares of life. They knew that life is full of struggles and therefore asked all men to be brave and courageous. They prayed for strength and valour for the God they worshipped was a God who gave strength. In a hymn the prayer runs:

"Oh! Ye God, thou art full of light; so let me have light. Thou art full of strength; so let me have strength. Thou art full of valour, so let me have valour. Thou art full of force; so let me have force. Thou punisheth wrong doing, so let me also have courage to put a stop to the wrongs of life. Thou art patience and let me have patience,"

In another hymn, which is to be found both in the Yajurveda and in the Atharvaveda, though in a slightly different form, it is said that the stream of life flows on. This river of life is full of pebbles You must therefore try to struggle hard. Stand up with erect heads and cross the difficult river Leave behind those who annoy thee in thy journey. Leave behind them who are your enemies, who put obstacles in your way and crossing the river meet with them who are thy friends.

It would, perhaps, not be out of place to mention here that the mentality of defeatism, which in the name of non-violence was proclaimed later on, was never the message of the Vedic seers. They asked us to fight and win the battle. We are to defeat the forces of ignorance, the powers of evil and by such

constant struggle we are to attain the divinity, that is our birthright. There is neither any mystery, nor any hidden truth behind this simple and transparent conception of the Vedic life of journey. Rishi Atreya prayed :

"Let Mitra and Varuna give me happiness , let the Goddess Revati give me joy and contentment. Let also Indra and Agni bring peace and prosperity to me and let also Aditi do the same. Like the Sun and the Moon, we would follow in the footsteps of the right path. We would be friendly with men, those who come again and again, those who do not hurt us, those who know us and love us with warmth and affection."

The Vedic philosophy affirms the oneness, that is hidden behind the diversities of the world. It also preaches the identity of life, nature and the world. This Adwaita theory is not a negative cult and with this high mission, we see in the Ishoponished that whatever there is, changes in this ephemeral-world—all that should be enveloped by the Lord. This expresses the summum bonum of human wisdom But this feeling of unity, this spritual oneness of existence, the divinity of all things is not easily attainable A strict life of discipline is necessary for the same. A life of constant activity which lead, men to devote themselves and to wish to contribute to the well-being of the society is rooted in this belief I shall not today speak of that discipline I shall not dilate on the various paths of self-realisation. I would only dwell on one aspect of Vedic culture. viz , the aspect which asked its followers not to live a static life but to live a dynamic life of action and movement In the Aitareya Brahmana, we get a story how a king, Harischanda by name, had no son. On the advice of Rishi Narada, he worshipped Varuna and got a son on condition that he would sacrifice the son to the deity. Varuna came to demand the son when he was some months old. But the

king was unwilling to give him then and in this way several demands were refused. Later on when the boy grew up and became strong, he did not listen to his father's request for becoming a sacrifice to the gods and he went away to the forest. In the forest he heard about a very serious disease inflicted on his father by the enraged Varuna. Thereupon Rohita determined to come up to his father. But on his way Indra stopped and resisted him from going to him saying "Oh thou Rohita, listen to this truth. Verily I tell unto thee that victory and glory is to him who is tired with his various activities" If a man keeps at home, he becomes a sinful man. God is the friend of the traveller. So, go forward, so go forward". Rohita went back and after an year again was going home, when Indra intervened and in this way Indra inculcated the message of progress to Rohita. Indra said, "One who walks on the path, his legs are strengthened and his noble and generous heart wins the fruits of greatness. All his sins fly away and work makes him happy and free. So go forward, go forward. The luck of one who sits idle, remains idle. His luck moves too, who himself moves. So go on, go on. Kali is to be found where a man lies in idleness. Dwapar is to be found with him who is on the point of movement He who actually moves, lives in the Treta and he who is moving on, lives in the Satya Yuga. So go on, go on. He that moves, drinks the divine honey. He eats the sweet figs on his adventurous way. Look upon the bright sun. He never sleeps. Follow in his footsteps and walk on and move on. This idea of sleepless activity was the Vedic ideal. A life of contemplation was not the true religious life. A man must go forward. A man must fight within the dust and dirt of this earth and thereby win freedom, joy and glory.

Now that India is free, we want that there should be advancement and progress in every walk of life. We should

attain new and glorious things, but nothing can be done here in this earth without works and sacrifice. Our young men should gird up their loins and begin doing work in right earnest But one cannot but regret to see that this spirit of activity is not our national characteristic. We are idlers and want to win things by easy methods But no great thing is to be gained except without Sadhana, Tapashya and devotion. And we must pray with our forefathers to the universal God Agni—"Oh thou luminous fire, the smoke of sin does not besmear you. You are always wakeful and you have no dream and no sleep You are on constant move. Oh, thou glorious God, you are working without stop You are not broken by the waves of sorrow and sufferings. You are not tired of work and movement Give us that power and action Give us that speed and movement Protect us and give us prosperity." This is what has been called by the sages of the old—the path of God, Devayana

I would call upon all the young men of India, to forget their sloth and idleness and to become sleepless in their activities India is poor in many respects We want improvements in the different walks of life It is not possible without men of character and without men of action and our Vedic forefathers asked us to be constantly active, active in days and active in nights and by this constant and continuous action we are to bring glory to the family to which we are born, glory to the country in which we are born and glory to that famous land of India, whose cultural heritage is our patrimony.

I would conclude this brief speech of mine with one more hymn I would quote this superb lyric for your constant meditation and for your daily application in life The Rishi prays—"Oh thou God, give sight to my eyes, but not only to the eyes, give sight and vision to all my limbs so that I may

see the immensity and the glory of this world, fully as well as separately, together on synthesis and apart on analysis. What a glorious prayer Our seers want us to go forward in life with a very wakeful soul. We are to see into the depths of everything and we are to see the joy, the beauty, the fragrance, the light and sweetness of the world with all our limbs A bright future is ahead of us. If you can understand the true significance of this message of life, this dynamic conception of religion and philosophy, I am sure our dreams would not be false, our hopes would not be stifled. India would surely grow up and progress forward and would take its rightful place in the federation of the world. This India can alone do by following the ancient ideal of progress, the ancient ideal of life and activity, and the ancient message of work and action.

The Message of the Vedas

We are passing through a critical phase of human civilization. There is no peace and there is no joy Life is full of problems. The world is in chaos. There must be something wrong—radically wrong in the world-affairs. Our politics, economics, industry and science are rich with wonderful achievements no doubt, but still there is no harmony and beauty in life, there is no hope and light in human activities and there is no symmetry and sweetness in our daily experiences All the world over, men of character and feeling are endeavouring to get rid of the present chaos so that humanity may be saved, so that the paths for a richer and nobler life may be opened for the entire mankind

In the darkness and chaos, free India can send her message of the spiritual life for the acceptance of the sorrow-stricken world. The Vedas are the immortal sources of our inspiration and culture and we must look towards the inspired Rishis for our guidance and light.

We must find from their treasure-house, a new art of life which will restore to the bewildered individual of our age his integrity and his wholeness The life of the individual has its true meaning and significance only when it can aid in making the life of every living being nobler and more beautiful. In this task, the Vedic culture will be of very great

help to the men of enterprise and idealism, who aspire to build a richer, a better and a nobler world. The Vedic Rishis laid great stress on sacrifice. The life of the individual must be a life of sacrifice from his birth to his death. What is the inner meaning of this sacrifice ?

The keynote of sacrifice lies in service. The great God sacrificed Himself in order to produce this world and the world is daily sustained by His sacrifice. The cycle of life cannot go on, unless there be mutual service and co-operation.

We should realise that the whole of our life is bound with the existence of other human beings. We take food that others have grown, wear clothes that others have woven, live in houses that others have constructed. We are what we are, not because of our individuality, but rather as members of the great human society. Hence we should live so that our feelings, thoughts and actions are directed towards the good of our fellow-beings. The Vedic conception of sacrifice develops this central idea that true life is something entirely different from the numerous selfish activities in which we are daily engaged, that we should not immerse ourselves merely in efforts, that satisfy our greed and avarice, but that we must live a life, dedicated to the cause of God, wherein we should find a harmonious and complete extension of the Self.

The present economic system is bad, because there is no giving and taking. Our decadence is due to the fact that the development of industry and machinery has not made our life happy and sweet and that it has not brought the desired leisure for a life of of culture and sweetness. It has made the truggle for existence more acute and more severe, so that we have no time to experience the joys of life. For the bringing back of the health of the community, for the material plenty

of the *individual*, for raising the standard of life, a planned scheme of production and distribution is necessary.

But to do this, a new outlook is necessary, and the intolerable hardships of unequal distribution of property can be mitigated, if people develop the social conscience which directs them not to live for themselves alone, but to live for the community and the world The White Yajurveda is a book of rituals. After describing the methods of the different sacrifices it ends with an Upanishad which is known as the Isha Upanishad. It begins thus .—

"Envelope everything in this world with the joy of God. Live bv sacifice, eat alter giving others and do not covet "

This is a *mantra*, pregnant with suggestiveness and thoughts The conception of Godhead in India is very high. *Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma*, God is truth, God is wisdom, God is infinite. Santam, Sivam Adwaitam. There is the highest peace in God, there is the highest good in God and there is the supreme unity of all things in God. The aspirant after spiritual life must therefore not lead a life of passive contemplation away from the battle-field of life, but he must act and act in the living presence of the Eternal Soul, by dedicating all he does to the Eternal Being This dedicated life is a life of service to all sentient beings and sacrifice is nothing but the dedication. In the Yajurveda, there is a sacrifice which is known as "Sarva medha yajna." It is a sacrifice for this well-being and prosperity of all. Let me quote a few of the beautiful mantras which will give the readers an idea of the noble conceptions that lie behind sacrifice This sacrifice for universal success was performed last of all and the sacrificer used to leave his home and retire to the wilderness for the rest of life after performance of this noble sacrifice.

"Oh Savitar, thou art loved by all men. Do come to our assembly to gladden all our people. We offer thee our heart-felt devotion through lively hymns and sacred food. Thou art youthful and may our songs make thee bright and brilliant so that thou wouldst illumine the men of the world. Y. 33-34

* * * *

"Oh Savitar ! thou art the first of the holy Gods. Thou sendest them the noblest gift of immorality. Thereafter thou givest the same to men and thus conferest existence of mankind—thou openest life succeeding life Y. 33-54.

We must pray with the Vedic seers for universal success and prosperity. Inspired with that intoxicated joy and amusement at the beauty and grandeur of this world, which made them ask for a life of hundred autumns, we must crave with them for a life of joy from which activity draws its spiritual sustenance We must ask for a life in which we can engage ourselves in actions and deeds and in thoughts and feelings which elevate us from the realm of the desire to the realm of service But this life of service and renunciation is no idle life of escape from the concrete realities of the world While saying with the Buddha, "Let all the sins of the world fall on me and the world be saved," we must acclaim with glory our life in this world. Life is sacred. It is the supreme value to which all other values are subordinate

We must sing with Sudas :—

"O Indra, we seek thy friendship—thy close intimacy. Lead us by the path of Truth and Virtue. We take shelter in thee. Free us from all grief and pain by the powers of the Holy Law. Bend the bows of others so that we may be victorious,

Teach us that secret by which we may drink the milk of Mother Earth in thousand streams, Lead us to the exhaustless udder of the great cow, for thou givest all that the devotees seek for." R. 10-133.

This and other passages in the hymns show conclusively that the Vedic seers did not despise this world. They loved life in its intensity aud did not turn their attention away from it. Life is a blessing and we can make it happy by living in tune with the Infinite. This complete spiritualisation of life radiates happiness all around, but it also elevates human life in its daily routine to the plane of an art The Vedic philosophy is, therefore nowhere a philosphy of asceticism. It preaches a new cult of action and devotion which exalts all the energies of the individuals. Life is not a bed of roses, obstacles and difficulties do come but, if rightly approached, they become a valuable source of health and strengh to any individual or to any society India has survived through her dark days by remaining faithfut to her moral and spiritual traditions treasured in the Veda India has overcome the heavy storms that have broken, by her spiritual fervour. Now that there is the dawn of a new life in India, We must pray for energy and vigour, joy and brightness, light and happiness, just as the Vedic sages did. In the service of life, we must, bring in beauty and grace.

Vasistha is a well-known seer. His songs would inspire us with new faith and new strengh. He sings :—

"O, Indra, O Varuna, grant us wealth and happiness that knows no bounds—give goodness for the life of service and sacrifice. Make our people and family strong and noble. May we conquer our foes who are evilspirited so that we can be steadfast in performing rites and rituals"

* * * *

"He knows no fear, has no trouble, gets no misfortune and feels no woe, whom you, Indra-Varuna grace with your favour. He suffers no injury from any mortal man, in whose sacrifice you do visit and enjov. Come to us, benign gods, with your divine light and grace. Listen to our songs and find favour with our hymns. We seek for your friendship, for your communion and favouring grace; you are the heroes of the people, be our champions in our weary battles. Be our strength and fortification, when different people seek for your favour. We invoke you for sons and progeny May Indra, Varuna, Mitra and Aryaman vouchsafe us great glory. Let our achievements be noble and far-spreading. Give us shelter. We bow down to the heavenly light of Aditi, the Infinite, who is the keeper of Law. We sing hymns in praise of Savitar, the great God" R, 7-82

Let India in her new freedom seek for that glory, that widens from day to day and attains to the loftiest possibilities of human endeavours.

The Vedic culture is a cult of Truth, Beauty and Sweetness. In a serene moment of our life, we feel a strange awe and delight, which come out of the Divine and invade the life of the soul This realisation, if it comes, inspires and moulds every detail of our life.

We must revive this lost love of our fore-fathers. The essence of that culture is based on courage and faith. We must have the plentitude of life which would establish us at a new vital level from which we would go forward and forward with ever newer aspirations. Life can never be perfect here on this side of the grave—but we can still make life sublime by our constant search for Truth, Beauty and Goodness. In

that holy quest, nobody should be left behind There should be no isolation, no barrier and no privileges Ours is the first age in history, when friendly and understanding intercourse between the different races of the world has become a reality We should no longer live in fear or hatred of one another. We should call the peoples of the world to the great Festivity of Human Unity in the words of Rishi Sanbanana·—

> "Assemble together, speak together, let your minds and hearts be one Let your ideas be the same. Common the assembly, common the purpose and resolve, so that you may all happily agree and prosper "
> R. 10-191

It is a pleasure to note that six thousand years back, a Vedic bard had the valuable conception of human unity and purpose Modern world needs peace and international amity, so that there would be opportunity all over the globe for mankind to develop their creative energies Nationalism must go Internationalism must be the creed and religion of all intellectuals.

We conclude with the Vedic prayer for Peace and Blessings.

> "Let the wind blow sweet, the rivers pour forth sweetness Let us live in the path of Right and Law Let the plants be sweet for us. Sweet be the nights and sweet the dawns Sweet be the dust that flows over the earth Sweet be our father Heaven to us. Sweet be the lordly trees of the forest. Sweet be the bright sun and sweet be our milch-cows "

Let sweetness and plentitude come on earth and let there be never-ending happiness in fullness of life out of our homage to the Vedas.

The Vedic View of Future Life

Death is a great riddle. It makes us pause and think. It is the mother of philosophy and the originator of religion.

It is a mystery that concerns each and every one of us, but the solution of the riddle is not yet in sight. Man has made wonderful progress in arts and sciences and he is proud of his power and achievements. But as the poet says—"the paths of glory lead but to the grave" and death remains still terrible and awful.

There is a beautiful legend in the life of Buddha. Once Malukyaputta went to Gautama and said "Lord ! tell me whether he, who whould attain Buddhahood would have rebirth ?" The great teacher laughed his beautiful laugh and replied—"Come Malukyaputta, be my desciple I shall instruct thee into the mysteries of eternity." But he was not to be put off with such an answer and he added—"But you have not answered me." Buddha rejoined—"Do not worry over such questions. If a man is hit by a poisonous arrow and if he tells to the physician, I would not allow you to apply medicine, unless I know the man who hit me. Whether he is a Brahmin, a Kshatriya, or a Sudra, imagine what his fate would be. Such too is the fate of one, who does not hanker after truth and religious life, simply because he does not know what would happen on the other side of death. Malukya-

putta, I tell thee verily; let the truth which has not been revealed as yet remain hidden, know the truth that I have found."

This is perhaps the last anwer on this knotty problem but inspite of this warning against speculation, about the life beyond, the question has attracted the devotion of man ever since the dawn of humanity. It is the forbidden fruit, but it still tempts each and every son of Adam.

The Vedas are the earliest records of humanity. They are looked upon as revealed knowledge by the Hindus They are full of the intuitive spiritual, experiences of the mighty seers, who delved deep and penetrated with an inner light into the mysteries of life and death It is therefore both interesting and instructive to learn what the Vedas have to say on this most vexed question.

It is a real pleasure to find that the Vedic seers were not afraid of death. They were keen lovers of life and thought that the other world was also full of life There is an atmosphere of joy and vigour in the Vedic Samhitas which cannot but impress even the most casual readers. The prayer for a century of life is very very common, It shows unmistakably that the Vedic seers were keen lovers of this world and took delight in life and in its activity. The emasculating pessimism which pervades the later literature, is conspicuous by its absence in the Vedas.

The fundamental idea that they gathered is that we are not mortal beings. There is some thing in us which is unborn and indestructible and persists through all eternity The Vedic sages determined the reality beyond the appearances of the physical world by an intuitive insight and their conception is therefore aglow with the immediate awareness of truth.

The Vedic view of creation would give us the truth that things that are, are from eternity and out of nothing comes nothing. The beautiful Nasadiya hymn is unique in its lofty idealism and the most convincing in its advanced logical theory. It runs as follows:—

"There was then neither existence nor non-existence, there was no air nor the sky which is bey ond. What covered ? Where was it and in whose shelter ? W as it water the profound abyss ?

Death was not there, nor immortality. There was no distinction between night and day. That one, breathed by itself without breath ; other than it, there was nothing beyond.

Darkness there was enveloped in darkness, in the begining all this was a sea without light—the germ that lay covered by the husk—that one was born by the power of tapas.

Desire first rose in him, in whom was the primal germ of mind and which seers having searched in their heart, found by wisdom to be the bond, that connects entity with non-entity.

This ray which was stretched accross, was it below or was it above ? There were seed-bearers (Ratodha)—there were powers ; Self-power below and Will above.

Who knows—who can declare from whence was born this creator. The gods came later than this creation, who knows whence it arose. He, from whom this creation arose, whether he made it or not, the highest seer in the highest heaven, he forsooth knows or does even he not know ?"

In-comprehensible is the mystery of creation but the conviction of the sage is that it is the manifestation of the One, whether we call it His maya with the Vedantists or His Lila with the Vaishnavas. The desire of the One is the creative life-force of the wonderful variety that we see all around. In this hymn is latent all the subsequent conceptions of the identity between the human-soul and the God-soul.

It does not mean as some suggest that being grew out of non-being. The hymn clearly says that the inexpressible first condition is beyond both being and non-being

But this philosophical conception of evolution from the unmanifest is a later development The alternate play of day and night was the most striking phenomenon of nature that stirred their poetic souls. They believed therefore that life and death are also pairs in the eternal cycle. Just as plants, so being follows non-being and non-being follows being. This is the Vedic conception of Pralaya—the eternal evolution and involution of things.

The graphic description of funeral ceremony that we find in the tenth mandala of the Rigveda gives us an insight into the inmost feelings of these optimistic singers

On the death of a man, his dead body was laid on the ground on a consecrated spot The priest placed a stone in the middle of the circle, made by the friends round the dead body, and then spoke—"Divided are the dead from the living. Propitious were our offerings to-day and we shall hence depart to dance and to be merry, for still is the life our own."

This joyful love of life is no disrespect to the departed soul. This indicates rather the vivacity and hopefulness of our Vedic

fore-fathers—who did not look upon this world as an idle dream, but wanted to say in the words of the Isha Upanishad "Doing verily works in this world, one should wish to live a hundred years". Full acceptance of the term of physical life, in duties and works, was the noble ideal of life.

They belived that the deceased go to the abode of the loving ruler Yama, to live in joy and peace with the ancient fathers of the race and to feast and regale there with the gods. One of the hymns uttered dur ing cremation says—"Go hence, withdraw, depart from hence. The Pitris have already prepared for him a place of bliss, Yama holds ready for him an abode of rest, where blessings flow as rivers night and day."

Yama was not as yet the terrible king of death. He was the first mortal to depart from this world. In an exquisite hymn to Yama we get a fine description of the kingdom of Yama. (Ix 113)

"Where there is eternal light, in the world where the heaven is placid, in that immortal, imperishable world, transport me.

Where the son of Vivasw at reigns as king, where there is the gate of heaven, where these mighty waters stream, there suffer me to dwell immortal. Where we may wonder at will, where the third heaven of heavens is, where there are worlds radiant in the light, there make me immortal

Where there is longing as well as the consummation of all desires, where the other side of the sun is seen, where there is refreshment and satiety, there make me immortal.

Where there is bliss and delight, where joy beyond joy dwells, where the desire of our desires is attained, there make me immortal."

In these five Riks, sung by the sage Kasyapa, we get that the life after is a blessed state of happiness, life and satiety.

Hence there is nothing to lament, nothing to make us melancholy over death. The Vedic poets knew that all of man is not mortal. The fire cannot burn the unborn part in man.

Addressing the fire on the funeral pyres the priest chanted, "The mortal part of this one is thine, O Agni, kindle them with thy heat. Consume them with thy flames But convey the man's unborn part assuming thy most auspicious forms to the abode of the righteous"

The Vedic people belived that fire was the messenger of the gods and he carried the things offered in sacrifices to the gods. It was likewise thought that fire would carry the unborn part of man i e. his soul to the gods in heaven

But to digress a little, the practice of cremation was not in vogue from the very beginning. There are certain hymns which clearly indicate that the oldest funeral rite was one of burial and later on, it developed into cremation first and then burial of the ashes of the dead and lastly to simple cremation. There is no evidence that the method of exposure prevailing among the Iranians was ever known to the Vedic Aryans.

There are no poetic expressions to describe the details of after life There is no imaginative picture of glory and feast that we find in later literature but reticence on this point about life, from whose bourne no traveller has returned as yet to give us information, seems more appropriate They are firm in their belief that the 'unborn part' in man is restored by death to its pristine glory and leads a happy and divine life in the world beyond in association of the old friends. We

learn however that the unborn part clothes itself in a new body, a glorified and unsubstantial one called 'sukshma sarira'. The dead pass on from glory to glory, from bliss to bliss for resplendent with light is the supernal abode "

The little, that we get about this life on the other side of death is, as it is, inevitably sensuous in character. The joy of heaven is concieved to be an extension of the joy on earth, bereft of its transitory character.

Opposed to this abode of glory and light is the land of infinite darkness, where live those who are wrong-doers on earth. Indra and Soma are invoked to hurl the evil-doers into bottomless darkness, so that not one of them may issue from it. The Rishis were lovers of bright and beatiful things. To them heaven was full of light and hell was full of darkness.

But as we come to the Atharva Veda and the Brahmans, we find that these simple and beautiful ideas have been transformed into developed doctrines of a heaven, full of all sorts of sensuous pleasures and of a hell, full of lurid torments, conceptions whose parallels are to be met with Dante or Milton.

But what becomes of the departed souls? Do they live for eternity in heaven in the blessed state and do the unfortunate wrong-doers suffer through eternity in the absymal chaos? The Christian theory of eternal retribution did never appeal to the thoughtful seers. It would seem unjust that eternal reward and punishment would be the result of works done in the short span of human life. Strong in their love of life, the Vedic Aryans could not conceive of utter extinction. Total annihilation would seem to them to be an inconceivable proposition. They therefore leaned upon the third theory of rebirth, which satisfies our logical minds and explains

satisfactorily the puzzle of human life. It accounts for the apparent difference between man and man and explains the unfair inequality of the world-order and justifies the moral order of the universe. The theory of rebirth seems to be the most rational and this hypothesis explains the mystery of life to our satisfaction.

But many in the West and their followers in the East have asserted that the Vedas do not contain any theory of the Karma and re-birth. On a true interpretation of the Vedic texts nd on a careful study of the Vedic culture, this view does not em tenable.

These hypotheses of Karma and re-birth are the two great pivots of Hinduism. The Vedas are the spiritual and psychological seeds of Indian culture and faiths which have no place in the Vedas, could not have gained such a general acceptance and wide recognition in the later philosophy and religion.

The prayer to Asuniti Rik. 8. I. is significant on this point. "Asuniti ! please give us over again eyes in this world, give us life again and the best enjoyments By thy grace, let us see over again the sunnv world—let us get vital breath and consciousness,—make us happy again and again. Let Soma give us a bright body by thy favour. Remove our sorrows and give us food in future lives."

This is not a solitary instance. In one of the funeral hymns ik X. 14. 8 we get—"Be united with the Pitris, with Yama and with the fulfilment of thy wishes in the higher heaven, discarding iniquity, return to thine abode, and unite thyself to a luminous body." This abode clearly refers to this world and this passage imports re-birth again in a brighter body.

We get a little later on in Rik. X. 16. 3.—"O deceased, let thine eye go to the sun, thy breath to the wind, go thou to the heaven, or to the earth, according to thy merit or go to the waters or to the plants with all thy parts as best beseems" This indicates birth according to the Karma of the departed being. This conception of transmigration of soul is also found in the other Vedas. We get in Yaju. 4. 15.—"O Lord let me get in my births a pure heart, a full span of life, health and strength, let me get back eyes and ears. O thou all-pervaiding, nourish my body in all lives, remove my sins and free me from all my misdeeds during my re-birth."

In Atharvaveda. 5. 1. 11 we find that the pious are reborn in god-like bodies for virtuous acts done in this life. The wrong-doers get no such opportunity—on death the soul lives for sometime in air in subtle body and then enters into the body of a male or a female through water or food and remains in the womb.

It is needless to multiply instances. These are sufficient to prove that the Vedic seers believed that men are born again and again in this earth It is no doubt true that these germs were later developed into full-fledged philosophical doctrines. The Vedas and the Upanisads frequently refer to two paths, the path of the gods and the path of the Pitris, the Devayana and the Pitriyana, the paths by which the departed souls proceed to the other world. The Devayana is the path of light orchimarga and this leads to the plane of Brahmaloka, through successive stations of light and there is no return from the same. The Pitriyana, on the other hand, leads to the world of ancient fathers, where after enjoying the fruits for his good deeds, the soul returns to the earth on re-birth.

These two paths have their origin in some sort of symbolism with which we have no longer any touch. The full meaning

and significance of the paths are therefore not within our reach. It may be that the path of light refers to the attainment of true knowledge, called Vidya in the Upanishads, by which one is carried to finer planes of existence, when the soul grows in finer lights and passes on and on to the highest beatitude. The Pitriyana is the path of life. It confines us to the vital planes of existence and the urge of life and desire brings us back to the earth for fresh endeavour. The Pitriyana cannot make us realise the abiding joy of spirit.

This explanation seems to be the best in the light of the Vedanta conception of emancipation. The conception of a lessed *life in a far-off world is a childish primitive idea and* it cannot satisfy us The Vedanta conceives the spirit to be bliss and joy and says *that we are one with this spirit.* Realisation of this truth at one takes the veil off our eyes and we become free in the radiance of Ananda.

The cloud of darkness covered the sun of light and we suffer. Once the cloud passes and we are bathed in the effulgence of the bright sun. The release, that is the desire of all, is not to be had in a far-off-land and not by and not in fellowship with gods. The highest acheivement of man is in fellowship with his soul. This constant communion in joy and bliss comes to the receptive soul, who, by a life of highest purity and spiritual hunger, makes him ready for reception of the spirit.

The Vedic conception of life in its development is the noblest idea ever thought-of by man. Man is the immortal son of light. His is the glory and joy of fullest life. The darkness of Avidya fetters him and he does not know his birthright. As soon as knowledge dawns, he sees that the vale of tears and smiles, in which he suffered, is due to his detachment and isolation from the infinite light and love.

Time and space are the ideas of the relative world, but speaking from the spiritual view-point, there is no past life nor future life. Man shines in his eternal glory and this glory can be seen and felt by one who has freed himself from the sense of relativity and lives in the highest freedom of love and light by receiving direct currents from the source of Infinite Life.

This life of spiritual realisation is not a life of inaction but of dynamic activity. It is life in harmony—it is life in blessedness. The world, weary with its fever and fret, may pause and look back upon this mystic conception of life. It may bring back to our weary souls the rhythm of life which we lack so much now-a-days.

The Essence of Vedic Culture

The Vedic Seers have left for us a rich legacy of thoughts and ideals, which we must know today in Independent India, in order to transform our lives and develop a richer and a nobler humanity. The modern age is uniting the whole world and thinkers and leaders all over the world are re-interpreting the deepest problems of man in world perspectives

One would bow down with profound devotion to the great Risis, whose prophetic vision saw the image of "God for all men (Vaiswanara) and proclaimed in one voice for world-unity 'In the Atharva Veda the prayer runs :—"May the mother Earth that bears peoples, speaking different tongues, with different religions that vary with different places of residence, enrich me with wealth in a thousand streams, like a cow that yields milk unfailingly." This is a catholic attitude which glorifies unity in variety and seeks for harmony and synthesis in the midst of diversity and difference In the Rigveda, they advise people to assemble together, to speak together and to have minds of one accord. The Vedic Culture is thus universal and the sages have enjoined that the teachings of the master-minds of that creative era should be made known to every body. The whole world should be aryanised with the civilisation of the Vedic period. Many wrongly think that the Vedic lore is a secret philosophy and is not meant for every body. In the

YajurVeda the injunction is that the blessed words of the Vedas should be spoken to the people at large.

The sense of the infinite is the basis of Vedic religion. Its roots lie in the spirit of man deeper than feeling, will or intellect. But this craving for reality and infinity need not lead to asceticism. The emphasis on renunciation at some period of our history has made many to think that the quest for the eternal succeeds only in austerity and other-worldliness. This too is a mistake.

Our Vedic fore-fathers were lovers of life. The true object of life is to make perfection concrete, in a creative, willing, loving act. This vital and active philosophy should be our motto today We should pray with them for a life of hundred years. This love of life is a cataclysmic experience transmuting all values, it adds another hue to the world, making it both more valuable and more appreciated than before. A long radiant life, rich in work, fruitful in knowledge and happy in work is all that we need.

The Risis pray :—May we look on the bright sun – the bright eye of the sky, for a hundred autumns. Ordained by God, may we live for a hundred autumns." But it is no dull and drab existence. It must be as the YajurVeda says a life in which we must see plenty, we must have much and we must talk much. We may live for more than hundred years, holding our heads high in creative pleasures. The Atharva Veda develops the idea more fully. A complete and perfect life is our goal. A life of progress, of creative will, of vigorous attempts to bring about the maximum good, of limitless love and knowledge may be ours, if we so will. The Vedic teachers longed for a new dimension to be achieved in human life through the experience of infinite love.

I wish to emphasise that this strong vitality was the chief characteristic of the Vedic age and we must revive the spirit of joyous creation in our hopeless social life. Man must love life and live life. Life that we know is of paramount importance to us. We shall know the harmony that is in it, we must taste the bliss, that pervades it and we must create the joy that it needs. Man is an architect and a maker of himself. The world of infiinite materials is before him but what he will make of it, is his own choice. Let us therefore love it and make the most of it.

This profound change in man's way of life is to be brought about by a deep sense of an inner light, by the mystic consci-sness of an abiding Reality Divinity is the birth right of man and he must attain it by realisation of his true self Kusidi Kanva in a hymn of the 8th Mandala says: "O bounteous gods, we have set forth our perpetual brotherhood with you, our kinship in mother's womb itself." When a man is born, he partakes of the divine nature.

The spiritual heritage of India is this conception of the divinity of man. In the Atharva Veda it is said—"Therefore whoever knoweth man, regardeth him as Brahma itself, for all the gods abide in him as cattle in a pen." Men are sons of immortality, their bodies are celestial

The burden of sin is not ours. We are not to live in penitence. Our vital impulse is one of bliss and supreme joy. To lift ourselves from the domain of nature to the sphere of spirituality we must know our identity with our God, our creator, and saviour, our father and friend Risi Trita in his prayer proclaims —"The effulgent Lord I deem my father, my kinsman, my brother. I take Him as my friend for ever I honour as the face of lofty Lord the bright and holy light of the sun, in the sky." A sage sings :—"O God, verily we are

thine, we worshippers depend on thee. There is none but thee to show us grace, O Mighty One, much invoked."

This complete surrender of man to the Divine Will is the highest religion of man. But this love and devotion to Godhead is useless, unless man guides the course of his life in ceaseless work and service One epithet of the gods, which is of frequent occurrence is that they are sleepless. Man therefore must exert himself to the utmost by constant exercise of will-force and endeavour. In the Aiteraya Brahmana the message runs :—"Go on, march on. Look at the bright sun on the sky. He never sleeps for a moment. You must be like him and journey onward and onward in the path of perfection."

The universe is moving towards a higher level of existence. There is a divine mission, which is being gradually fulfilled by the will of God. This cycle of progress can continue only by our whole-hearted work and service

Our advancement in India depends on solid work, but instead of self-less work and persevering devotion, we are making mainly vain boasts Words avail nothing, unless there is work behind Work and more work is our need today.

The path of knowledge looms large before our eyes. But we must bear in mind that our Vedic forefathers wanted us to be Karma-Yogins. We must strive hard for health and strength, for a peaceful body and a perfect mind. We must long for a long life and for the good things of the earth. We must fight and fight and win victory over all kinds of evil. Let this dynamic faith of our seers come back to us. Let this thirst for active existence well up again in our heart for the ennoblement of mother India. But an active and happy life is not for selfish ends. He that eats for himself, eats no food but sin. One can attain unity with God and through God unity with the rest of humanity and creation, through the

cultivation of self-sacrifice and self-lessness This is the true import and essence of Vedic Sacrifice.

Good is that which makes for unity, evil is that which makes for separateness. Attachment to self and selfish desires is the way to fall and non-attachment is the gateway to advancement. The Vedic religion is a self-transcending awareness. The more there is of I, me and mine, the less there is of truth and harmony. The life of the spirit is a leap from the world of limits to the limitless joy of love and fellow-feeling.

To the mystic seers of the Vedas, the sumum bonum of life was the direct and intuitive awareness of God. But this supreme goal is to be achieved in a life of vital joy and activity, in a life of creative energy and all-round advancement in one integral harmony for the welfare of all.

Let this spiritual illumination light our paths once again. Let us be willing instrument of the divine will. Let us spread the truth and love, visioned by our beloved fore-fathers, not in empty words but through dynamic actions and living examples. If we can do so, we shall carry out their wish of aryanising the whole world and shall bring to the world, a new age of radiant hopes, for fulfilment and manifestation of man's divine destiny

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The Avesta from the Hindu Point of View

In the whole of world literature, there is nothing which can stand comparison with the Vedas. For their serene and solemn outlook, for their grand style, their spiritual values and their universal appeal, they are the loftiest masterpieces of ancient human achievements. The Avesta, the book of the old Iranians, who were the nearest kinsmen of our Aryan forefathers, throws considerable light on the thoughts and ideals of the Vedas, and when studied on the background of the Vedic literature, the Avesta discloses new shades of meanings. A comparative study of the Vedas and the Avesta is thus of real positive value, both to the Hindus, whose culture and religion are based on the Vedas and the Parsis who look upon the Avesta as their sacred Bible.

The meaning of the word *Avesta* is uncertain and different scholars give different meanings. We would think however that the name is derived from the Sanskrit word *Upastha,* which is a synonym, for the Veda Saujana in his work on "The Ancient Persia and the Parsis" writes: The conjecture of Prof. Andrews, which Karl F. Geldner is disposed to concur in, is that Avistak or Avastak is to be traced back to the old form *Upastha* and thus signifies foundation or foundation-text. Saujana, however, dose not seem to have

known that Upastha is equivalent for the Veda just as Sruti, Amnaya and others The Sanskrit equivalents for the Veda, Mantra, Sruti, Amnayas, Chandas have their counterparts in the Avesta as Mathra, Prasanto, Benai and Zend The Atharva-veda is styled as Atharvangirasa or Bhrigwangirasa Generally it is interpreted to mean that the Atharva-veda consists of two classes of Mantras—spells that protect the sacrifices and hymns that refer to sacrifices. But a better conclusion would be to take the Atharva-veda to consist of two books, one of the Atharvans and the other of the Angirasas Atharva and Angira are two famous risis Their descendants and followers are known as Atharvans and Angirasas There is a Rik, which says that it was Atharva who first disclosed the path of sacrifice The heirs and disciples of Atharva, who were the fire-priests of ancient India are to be identified with the Atharvas, the fire-priests named in the Avesta

We would presume that the Avesta is the last Bhargava Upastha The extant Atharva-veda in India is only the Angirasa book of the Atharva-veda.

It has been ascertained beyond all doubt that the old Iranians and our Aryan forefathers once lived together They had common conceptions and common ideals But later on, there was a schism between the two sections The real reason of the quarrel is not known. We can conjecture that it was due to differences in worship In the *Mahabharata* we find that there was a fight between the Devas and the Asuras. The Devas selected Brihaspati, the son of Angira as their preceptor, while the Asuras selected Sukra, the Bhargava as their priest and teacher. It is further stated that because of this fight, the two sections began to have their prayers and sacrifices by different mantras. This would explain the loss of Bhargava Upastha from our sacred literature. But if we

bear this in mind, it would be possible for us to interpret the Vedas and the Avesta correctly with reference to the common ideals and conceptions. The Avesta has close resemblances, both in language and spirit, to the Vedic literature and if we try, we shall be able to find Vedic words, idioms and ideas as equivalents to Avestic ones.

In Yasna. 71. 11. we get that "there is but one path—the path of *Asa*—all others are false paths." The essence of Avesta is *Asa*. The scholars are unanimous that the Avestan *Asa* and the Vedic *Rita* are the two variants of the same word. In the Vedas we are told that the gods are mighty because they uphold the eternal law of *Rita*. The divine deities are lords of *Rita* and protectors of the eternal law Madhucchanda, the Vedic Risi says, "O thou Mitra and Varuna, thou art great and mighty because thou lovest the everlasting law, thou cherishest the eternal order of universe"

The gathas embody this Vedic idea and uphold that human life should be founded on Asa. In Yasna 60.12 we find that the worshippers express the wish that "Through the last Asa, through the highest Asa, may we get a vision of thee, may we get a visit of thee, may we draw near unto thee, may we be in perfect union with Thee."

The Indo-Iranians looked upon this universal order prevailing in nature with awe and reverence and tried to mould life gracefully with the ordered movement, they saw all around them. The Asa-Rita conception is the noblest achievement of human mind. It stands for the righteousness of God-head and exhorts man to be of one will with Asa and thereby approach *Ahura mazda*, the great Asura, he highest divine being. Asa is vahista i.e., vashistha, the best that man can

think of. To be upholder of Asa, man must be pure in body, mind and spirit. He should have good thoughts, good words and good deeds We must live in the atmosphere of Asa and radiate it all around in our life. It would bring us inward peace and joy in our daily hardships and trials. It is for this reason that *Asem vohu* has been ordained as the daily prayer of the devout Zoroastrians

It runs thus :—

"Asem vohu vahistem asti, usta asti ,
Usta uhrmai pyat Asai vahistai Asem."

It can be put into a Sanskrit verse word for word without much change :

Ritam vasu vasishtam asti istam asti
Istam atmai yatas Ritaya vasishtaya Ritam.

A righteous life is the richest life, we can have—it is the best and should be the goal of life on earth. He attains the goal, who lives for righteousness alone.

It is around this sublime pivot of universal order and righteousness that the ethics of our Indo-Iranian forefathers revolve The gods are gods because they are possessed of Asa and Rita, and man may divinise himself by conforming his life to this noble truth in his life Man is free to choose for himself the path of righteousness or the path of wickedness, one of which is hard and the other pleasant. But if he wants abiding peace, joy and immortality, man must embrace Asa and follow the good life through all the struggles of life.

The Indo-Iranians were lovers of life To them life is a joy. They had robust faith in living. It is for this reason that the Risis in the Vedas ask for hundred autumns of cheerful and happy life.

A Vedic hymn runs thus :—We must see with joy hundred autumns, we must have our feast of life for hundred years, we must live and thrive for hundred autumns. We must thrill with the joy of life and increase ourselves for hundred autumns. We must have the boon of life growing with joy and cheer from day to day during our long life. We must be in union with nature for these hundred years. We must have enthusiasm for these hundred years—nay not only hundred but more than hundred years.

In Yasna, 43. 11. Zarathustra preaches also the joy of living. "Happiness comes to him who gives happiness unto others. The great lord bestows joy and peace to one who dedicates himself for the good of others. For progress and for upholding the path of righteonsness, one must pray for vitality and strength of soul"

Pessimism took hold of the Indian mind later on and our thinkers and philosophers lost faith in the robust optimistic outlook of the Vedic singers. To them, this world became a place of sorrows and sufferings and they sought out means for escape from this sordid world Life is pain and suffering and we must have deliverance from the world-ache. But there is nowhere this sorrowful outlook in the earliest songs and hymns. To these hardy and hopeful, life was full of honey. They saw joy and gladness in all the movements of nature. Gotama Rahugana sings with glee :—

"Let the wind waft sweets, the streams pour sweets for him that keeps to the path of Rita. Let the plants be sweet to us. Sweet be the night and sweet the dawn, sweet be the dust of the earth and sweet be our father Heaven to us.

May the lordly trees bring sweets and pleasant be the Sun.
May the quarters of the earth be full of sweets to us."

Zarathustra too asks for earthly blessings. The reward of joyful and happy life is invoked in most of his prayers. We must accept life as we find it but shall make it sweeter and richer by radiating cheer and happiness to all with whom we come in contact.

This philosophy of optimism was later on embodied in the theory of *Anandam*. Man is born of *Anandam*. He lives and has his being in *Anandam* and he merges into *Anandam* This grand message of *Anandam* of our forefathers must be revived in the storm and stress of modern life

But this life of happiness is not a life of sloth and idleness. It is a life of active self-sacrifice. The Aryans and the Iranians were both followers of sacrifices Martin Haug says;—
"The Izeshne Ceremony, as performed by the Parsee priests now-a-days contains all the element of which the different parts of the *Jyotishtoma* cycle of sacrifices, the prototype of all the Soma sacrifices is composed The *Agnishtoma* (i e , praise of Agni, the fire-god) which is the opening sacrifice of this cycle and indispensable for every *Agnihotra*, to gain the object wished for viz , heaven, bears particulary a resemblance to the performance of Izeshne"

Yajna however is no mere ceremony It is the realization of the great design of Godhead in the evolution of the world. Progress is possible, advance is achieved, only by the active services of man in society When we work for the good of others and render our services for society, we not only become ourselves richest in spirit but we preserve the social order and add meaning and purpose to human history. Each man must exert himself to the best of his powers and consecrate himself for the good of humanity, we must not live for ourselves alone. We must live for one and all We must render active

services and add something worthy to the sumtotal of the life of humanity.

It is said in the Rigveda—*Kevalado Kevalagho Bhavati*—one who eats himself, eats sin alone. The great world cycle moves because of sacrifices of the great Lord and we also must daily perform these sacrifices in protecting the divine Kingdom of Righteousness

Let us now turn from these general conceptions and look to some of the particular aspects of the *Avesta*. The *Avesta* golrifies *Ahura mazda*. Its Vedic variant is Asura mahat. In the earliest hymns of the Rigveda, we have references to this Asura mahat and there can be no doubt that before the schism Asura mahat was a common name for highest divine beings among the Indo-Aryans.

In a hymn of Vamadeva we get the following :—

> "Mahat tannama Guhyam Purusprig, yena Bhutam janayo yena Bhavyam."
>
> "Mahat" is that secret name, whereby thou created all that is and all that shall be."

There are seven ministering angels who together form the great Lord Ahura mazda. They are more or less symbolic ideals, and moral concepts They are known as Amesha spenta whose Sanskrit transliteration would be Amartya saptam—the benevolent immortals. These are known as Vohu Manah, Asha, Kshathra, Aramaiti, Hansvatat and Ameratal They are the variants of Sanskrit, Brahman Rita, Kshatra, Aramati, servatata and Amritata The first three are active virtues, which when followed bring devotion, infinite blessings and immortality to the worshipper. Vohu manah is generally translated as good mind. Man obtains power

through goodness of mind Good mind directs the paths of the devotee and through him he is able to traverse the path of righteousness. One who resorts to the wisdom and grace of the Lord through Vahu manah and Asa attain the power, worldly and heavenly, of God and thereby inaugurate the kingdom of Mazda on the earth.

Let me conclude this little essay with a brief summary of the Ahuna vaivya manta, which is regarded by the pious as the very root of their faith. Zarathustra is acclaimed by them as a world-teacher and it is said that the hymn contains the essence of his teachings—the eternal principles of Truth, Love and Service.

"Yatha Ahu vaivyo, Atha Ratus asat cit hoca
Vanghews dozda Manangho syaothananam anghenghem
Hazdam "
Xsahrem ca Ahurai a yim dnguvyo dadat

Its Sanskrit transliteration would be something like what is given below:

Yatha Asu vuyam Atha Ratus Ritat chayat asya
Brahmasya data manasas kuyamananam Asura Mahatas.
Kshatramch Asurasya yam durgataya dadat vatrams

Just as the sovereign Lord is all-powerful, so is the spiritual leader through the store of Asa, the universal order. The gift of Brahman comes to him who works for God, the Lord of life The strength of God descends on that man indeed who gives shelter and love to the poor and meek

The whole world moves in the path of law. We must adore this eternal law and follow it in the actions of our life. This divine law is fulfilled in our life, only when we lead

active lives doing good to others. The great design of God is furthered by our active co-operation and service.

This mantra therefore contains the true meanings of the prophet Ahura Mazda. To attain the peace and joy of God, we are to follow the three paths—the path of knowledge, the path of love and the path of service. These are inter-related. We now know and feel the presence of God, our Lord Ahura Mazda, and by love and faith we now embrace him. But this love and faith, is to energise us into action. There is evil in this world. We must destory evil. Our life is to be one of continued battle against the powers of evil and wickedness This we can do best by seeking salvation of all mankind. We fight the evil best when we make others good. The good must triumph ultimatvolves we can espouse the cause of truth and virtue by fighting against wickedness and working for righteousness.

A synthetic integral philosophy of life is what the care-worn and troubled humanity needs to-day. We shall find it in the oldest teachings of our Indo-Iranian ancestors.

Let us cling fast to their noble and sublime teachings. Their faith was of life and cheer, their love was deep and purest, their worship was pure and holy and their work was selfless and pure. Let the unhappy world turn once more to their glad-tidings.

The Avesta and the Vedas together supplement one another. They proclaim the message of hope and joy. They are unaware of the existence of evil in life. This stubborn fact cannot be denied. What man can do in this world of conflicts is to lead a life of growth and evolution Perfection would perhaps never be attained by man, but no one can be apathetic to the creed of development. We daily attain

perfection and health by the ever-enduring process of perfection Happiness is the criterion of the value of human life, pleasure is not the standard, but a life of love and service where we daily enrich and perfect our lives through our failures and defects

As a Hindu, I hail the mystic lore of the Avesta and I fondly hope that this forgotten Bhargava Veda will take its rightful place among the vast body of our sacred literature. It could be a source both of curious delight and ennobling inspiration.

The values of a careful study of the Avesta are manifold First, as Louis Renou says—the work of interpretation of the text of the Rig [illegible] comparative study of the data on ritual, the results of comparative grammar, mythology, ethnology and the study of the Avesta Unfortunately a comparative study of the Vedas and the Avesta is yet to be done. Secondly, the Avesta will be also of help in determining the date of the Rigveda The close relation between the Avestic gathas and the Rigvedic hymns may afford clues for building up an acceptable chronology. Thirdly, the Avesta is likely to throw much light on a detailed study of the Atharvaveda Fourthly, it is necessary to study the evolution of the Aditya on the background of Avestic Amesha spenta, Trita against Avestic Thrita, Vayu against his Iranian counterpart and of many of the conceptions in the Vedas against those of the Avesta.

The Message of the Ishopanishad in Modern Life

To-day India stands at the cross-roads. Free India must know her true self. She must look upon her ancient faith with fresh eyes and readjust her culture in the light of the complex problems of modern life. India's civilisation was never static. It has been a dynamic growth and it has shaped itself anew with the changed circumstances in each new century. We must go to the treasure house of our culture for inspiration and guidance and on their basic principles, we must build anew our life and philosophy to suit the requirements of a new age.

The Isha Upanishad, otherwise known as the Bajasaniya-Samhita Upanishad is a Vedic Upanishad, which forms part and parcel of the white Yajurveda. Jajnavalkya, the great Seer is the author of the whole Yajurveda and Isha Upanishad thus contains the philosophy of that great thinker in a concise but forceful manner. It consists of merely 18 couplets and within that brief compass, it unfolds the mystery of the mystic life, the guiding impulse of the creative life and by reconciling the diverse extremes, paves the way for a rich spiritual life

Unless this book can lead us onward in life, it is no use in glorifying it. It may be held in great esteem and reverence by the people, but that is no reason by itself for its appeal,

unless it can give us an insight into reality and alter our life and experience with a new colour.

The first and foremost message of this Vedic Upanishad is one of joy in life and its activities. One should wish to live hundred years verily by doing works The Vedic seers were not apostles of negativism and asceticism. They felt the exceeding joy that life needs and wanted to enjoy the same to its fullest contents. Vasistha, in a hymn to Indra, asked for that Yoga, which would enable the Rishi to milch the cow Earth of its limitless treasure The Isha Upanishad carries forward the Vedic philosophy of life and preaches the cult of sweetness and light.

The joy that is in the Sun-light, the thrill that moves the leaf, the splendour of the clouds, the sweet smell of the mother Earth, all these and other varied things of life should bring limitless wealth of delight to the Seeker of truth. This world is no illusion Here on this earth, in the mud and dust of daily life, we are to find out the honey that flows from the wind, the sweetness that moves the streams, the light that fires the Sun and the Moon, the splendour that is in love and friendship.

Free India needs to-day this gospel of joy and work. India cannot advance by talking mere platitudes We must do hard work. Honest and unflagging in every walk of life, conscientious devotion in every department is now necessary for the progress of India. The song of despair, the burden of worry, that came to India during her bondage must now give place to the gala feast of delight and activity.

Religion in India has ever been a thing of the heart and not of the head. The Seekers need not bother themselves with metaphysical subtleties but with spiritual good. They want

inner illumination and not intellectual victories. This, one can do by work—consecrated and dedicated work.

This is the second message of the book. Live a life of consecration, dedicate yourself to the cause of God. The vision and consciousness of God should make our life sweet and sacred and we should have enjoyment of this world of delight, with realisation of the unity of the Lord and freed from all cravings after the things of the world

The seer of the Isha Upanishad insists on renunciation, but it is no ascetic escapism, it is no world-negating process. What it requires is participation in the free delight that is in this universe but with an understanding of our oneness with God. When we have this attitude of life, we have no desire and no greed. Realising our unity with all beings, we share the joys of the creation in his universal self-expression.

This leads us to have that ever undenying love which embraces the whole world in its fold and takes away all conflicts in our social relations The modern world is no longer the isolated world of the past The barriers that stood between man and man in different lands and climates are giving way to our technical triumphs and the great and vast world must stand or fall on co-operation and co-ordinate efforts. The brotherhood of true nations can be built only on a sound philosophy of love and harmony.

The Isha Upanishad promotes natural understanding and harmony between man and man by inculcating the noble idea that we must see our own self in all existences. This outlook on life colours not only our ethical life but also enlivens our cosmopolitanism and if developed properly, it would enable us to form that world common-wealth in which each nation will find freedom and security, in which

each branch of mankind will be able to achieve its highest ends in the larger life of mankind.

These verses on universal unity and love also promote righteous living. Hinduism enjoins strict code of practice. Our beliefs may vary, our thoughts may be different, but we must all lead the life of the spirit. This we can do by accepting the law of right, by following the path of truth and realising the light of spirit in our daily life. Here comes the question of reconciliation between uncompromising extremes

Desires are the basic forces of life and stimulate men to diverse activities The Seer of the Isha Upanishad asks men to be true to the kindred points of heaven and home and link up the realm of desire with the prospective of the eternal. The very first verse lays down the idea of one spirit inhabiting the world of movement and on this fundamental unity prescribes the divine life in one of enjoyment But renunciation of all desires is the condition precedent to this enjoyment Our greed moves us to have possession. The lord inhabits each object, so we should not regard anything in the universe as a necessary object of possession

We must feel in our heart of hearts the joy and bliss which the seer of Upanishad rightly termed as *"Ananda"* We are one in the all beings of the world and we have participation therefore in their enjoyments If this thought-force guides us, if this feeling moves us, we live free in this world As already said, this life of joy is no life of inaction. One who has this joy becomes the most active worker and accepts the term of physical life as part of the perfection to which he aspires. In order to have this perfection and delight we must not seek delight in the object of desires but must look behind to the Brahman which expresses itself in that object of desire.

In order to emphasise this view, the poet of the Upanishad devotes a few verses in elucidation of our conception of the One, the Universal and the Supreme, the Eternal and the Infinite. We must realise that we are being of His being, force of His force. Perfect freedom, perfect joy and perfect peace come with the vision of all existences in the Self, and of the Self, in all existences. In proportion as our vision grows and as we perceive the movement of the universe as the Lila of Sachchidananda, all our repulsions, fears and perversions of feelings disappear and we dive deeper and deeper into the sea of sweetness and light.

For the acceptance of life, we must transcend the limitations of the world. We must spiritualise our life and by that divine life, we must have the consciousness and joy of the Sachchidananda here in this life. The bondage is apparent. It is a play. As soon as we realise the secrets of the game, it is over and we partake ourselves of the freedom and bliss that is eternal and universal.

The Isha Upanishad ends with a sublime prayer to Agni, as the embodiment of Paramatma and prays for material and spiritual felicities The seeker wants to be led to infinite truth, goodness and beauty by self-abrogation and self-surrender.

This surrender to Godhead is the key note of this sublime book. One should accept worldly relationship as manifestations of the eternal and thereby attain peace and harmony. It rightly says :—In darkness are they, who worship the world alone, but in far greater darkness, are they who worship the infinite alone. He who accepts both, saves himself from death by the knowledge of the Avidya and attains immortality by the knowledge of the Vidya.

For the truly spiritual life, there should be thus a reconciliation between the finite and the infinite and this we can have

by a perfect self-surrender. We must be in tune with the infinite by consecrating our soul to God. Worldly prosperity alone cannot give us the solace we seek We must have a new birth in the heart of the eternal.

The surest and safest way to the fulfilment of the spirit comes by dedication of ourselves to the Lord. One who wants to rise above the narrowness and darkness of human nature into the great expanse of truth and light must give up this egoistic will and activity and accept spiritual initiation and illumination from above in a mood of complete self-surrender. Then alone, by the surrender of the heart and whole nature into the hands of the All-blissful ; he has the divine peace, transcendent knowledge and the supreme Ananda

The Upanishada-Ideals of Education

In recent years, there has been a wave of despair all over the world. We are on the crossways and know not what to do. Our achievements in science are immense but still we have no peace. In the midst of conflict and confusion, the world is eager for a message. The Upanishadas are the treasure-houses of the lore of the great Rishis of India and inspite of their archaic atmosphere they still have an abiding inspiration even now.

What is needed for the emancipation of the world is a new outlook on life based on a new system of education. It may be profitable, therefore, to understand the Upanishada-ideals of education and to preserve whatever there is of outstanding value among this heritage of ancient wisdom.

The life of the student is called Brahmacharya in the Upanishadas. It means, in its derivative sense, life in God. Realisation of God in our life was the highest ideal of India and this too was the goal of education. Their is in man—an aspiration for the Infinite, a longing for the Most High and the Majestic Each one of us feels it, but we cannot define it. This feeling in us proves unmistakeably our innermost hankering for the attainment of this inexpressible infinity.

Education gives us the key to unlock the mystery of this divine secret. It reveals to us our noble heritage—it points

to us our possibilities here in this world and it thus inspires us with confidence and hope for living the good and righteous life on earth

Education aims at the harmonious development of man's faculties and for the budding of all the latent energies of man. The quest before the ancient was to know that thing, by knowing which, nothing else need be known. This they called Brahma, the Great, and man's life is to be tuned with this Great, with this Infinite and the path and way to the same is Brahmacharya. The seer says—"Happiness lies in expanse—there is no joy in littleness."

Education therefore must aim at that broadening of vision, that widening of outlook, in which we can understand the unity that lies beyond the variety of the universe and by knowing which, we can have everlasting bliss. There is no hazy shadow round this noble conception. It may appear mystic to some but it is not at all mysterious Its aim is unfoldment of the inner self—which has forgotten its true nature in the darkness of life—development of our apprehension of the largeness, which is our real nature.

The Taittiriya Upanishada gives a very fine story, how the knowledge of Brahma was attained by Bhrigu, the son of—Varuna. The son approached the father for enlightenment about Brahma—The father answered—"*Tapasa Bhrama Bijijnaswa Tapo Brahmeti*, Seek Brahma through Tapasya i e steadfast application, Verily Tapas is Brahma."

Education, to be true, must be a inner acquisition and the way to the same is by steady devotion and gradual discipline. Truth must be felt by mental exercise It cannot be swallowed. An austere and strict life of discipline is necessary for real perception of the Truth

The son went through the course and learnt by gradual stepts the highest idea of *Ananda*. It is *Ananda* (joy) that is Brahma. The world has been created out of *Ananda*. It is *Ananda* that sustains the universe and in the end *Ananda* will engulf everything.

The ancient sages laid down rules for the life of Tapasya. In the same Taittiriya Upanishada, we get :—

"Teachers should instruct their pupils in the following method : Speak the truth, follow the right, abstain from sexual indulgence, never be negligent in learning and teaching, devote yourselves to sciences, till your knowledge is perfect ; then procure for your teacher what he needs, thereafter go to be a householder. Do not slip away from truth. Do not be indifferent to virtue. Do not neglect health and your talents. Never neglect to acquire wealth and heaven. Never forget your studies.

Forget not to serve your parents, your teachers and preachers. Do righteous deeds and shun evil ones. Imbibe our virtues and not our faults. Keep the company of the learned and pious. Be charitable. Give in faith or even without faith."

The translation, at first sight, may appear trivial and common place, but the ideals involved are not. The first essential teaching is a love for truth and acceptance of truth at all costs. As an ideal, this is perhaps the noblest on earth. But it was and it is still very difficult to follow them in practical life Inspite of our wonderful progress in rationalism, superstitions reign supreme in us and we find it hard to tread on the path of the right. There are so many obstacles in the way.

The ancient Indians, however, were acute thinkers, bold and fearless, and one of them had the courage to deny God for want of proof. This is not a single instance only. There are numerous examples when they were ready to do anything for the sake of truth. The achievements of the Indian thinkers in the domain of Philosophy is the result of this intrepid thinking. They were never afraid of logic and reason. One sage has declared—Do not follow the Sastras alone but depend upon your reasoning, for you do wrong when you adopt a course without reasoning.

Rationalism is the order of the day, but still in the advanced West, its place in life is not so high as it should be. Tradition dies hard—we are everywhere conservative by nature—so there are strange anomalies in life.

Modern world requires brave men, honest men and courageous thinkers. All barriers of caste, creed and nationality must be swept away and a new society is to be built with all that is best in the past, with all that is best in the present and with all that we think to be the best. Our education should aim at producing men and women who should be able to think and act internationally, who should have the broadest vision and the largest outlook on life. For this, the first and the foremost ideal before us should be an intense love for truth. Satyat na Pramaditabyam—we should not avoid the truth at any cost. The future society should be an assemblage of rational men. Love of truth is the foundation of the same.

The second great ideal is that of self-sacrifice. When we live for our little egoes, we live for miseries and calamities in life Rivalry, competition, oppression and war are the results of selfish motives. Greed is at the bottom of all the ills that we

suffer from in our modern society. In its place, we should build up a humanity which should be a congregation of self less disinterested workers. It is not an impracticable ideal—it is but a practical solution. It is possible if we can change our out-look on life.

The idea of living for the community, the idea of serving the humanity was called sacrifice in India. Sacrifice is necessary for anything great. World-peace and world happiness can come only through the acceptance of the spirit of sacrifice.

Our future generations must be brought up with this ideal of dedicated life, with this message of consecration. It must be a life of love, intense love for the whole of humanity. Selfish greed limits you, narrows you down, but love expands your soul and makes you feel the innate greatness which you have.

A life of love alone would lead to the Universal brotherhood, would secure the Universal fellowship, which is the dream of the poets, which is the hope of the philosophers. But it must come by efforts, honest and sincere efforts for the inflow of Universal love in each and every heart of the human race.

It is no mystical ideal, outside the zone of ordinary human beings. The ideal life is one of joy in this mortal world. Perfect health, sound mind, wealth and talents—these are not to be renounced. *Kusalat na Pramaditabyam*, one should not refrain from things that bring health and skill. Our knowledge should be for the furtherance of normal happy lives. People may argue that if you take away competition from life, you take away the incentive to progress. Not at all, if we read aright the history of the world, the greatest discoveries in science and industry have been made by scientists not for

money but for the immense pleasure, one finds in the pursuit of knowledge. If our lives be moulded by ideals of service and love, if we be prompted to activities by ideals of sacrifice then all the gifts of sciences and arts should be used for the benefit of humanity at large and not for the favoured few. This would mean a happier world—a richer and better humanity. It is no utopian dream. It is possible, but before it comes, we shall have to readjust our lives. We shall have to forsake our selfish desires and shall have to make our lives sweeter and gentler by interlinking feelings of charity and love.

There is no joy—there is no sweetness in the lives of men to-day. *They are like mosses in the current*—they flow on and on—knowing not what to do or what to think, from sensation to sensation It is a life of hectic bustle. Frankly it is a diseased world

We all want happiness There are materials for happiness Nature is abundant in her gifts. Science has added to them and has improved upon them We can be happy if we will. The present system is worn out. This economic order—this life of inordinate greed—this system of doubt and difference must make way for something better and nobler.

There is a way out of this Chaos That is in new education, which combines science and philosophy in its practical application to life. It must be a harmony of scientific progress and spiritual advancement. The mind and the heart must be tuned together We should have more of practical love, more of practical science and more of social fusion It should bring about a world-federation, which should not be as some may apprehend, a static millenium but a progressive loving brotherhood, where there should be struggle but not between man and man, but between man and nature.

Some may accuse me of too much of poetry, too mnch of imaginative flight. I plead guilty, but let them not forget that what was one day a mere dream, is an actuality to-day. For example, television was merely a dream with the Victorians, but to-day it is a fact. World-felloship, world-brother-hood, world-peace and world-happiness may seem impracticable dreams to those, who do not want movement, who do not want to exert themselves for a good cause. But to the active, to the optimist—it is a terrible programme. I am confident that by the efforts and activities of these sincere believers, it would come about sooner or later. It is a question of years.

But for this—there should be education all over the world, on international lines and on international ideals. The ancient ideals of truth, love and sacrifice, the ancient emphasis on health, wealth and peaceful activities may be illuminating and inspiring and free from bias and prejudice, let us go back to them for inspiration and enlightenment.

The preceptors in ancient India were great men. They were men, who had no worldly aspirations, but still they were past masters of applied psychology, India has ever believed in the great and mighty forces that lie hidden in each human being. They helped the students in understanding their latent soul-forces and enabling them to realise the highest truth by developing their true personality. The West is learning a little of it and there are now-a-days, springing up a number of institutions which profess to apply psychology to life. Strong discipline is necessary for developing a forceful convincing personality. There are beautiful stories to show how this was done.

Ayodadhaumya got for his disciple Aruni and Uddalak. Without giving them any lessons, he put them to severe exercises

of tending cattle and looking after fields. They showed by their zeal and undaunted devotion that they were ready to make any sacrifice for the sake of duty. Then the teacher blessed them and said that they would be versed in all the branches of learning. From this we see, that it was a practical training of the body, mind and soul.

These ancient Gurus, as they were called, knew the secret of success. They knew the power of thought, they knew the value of will-force Without trying to burden their students with the encyclopaedic details, they tried to instil into each heart an *invincible self-confidence, showed the way for the* mastery of self and thereby the mastery of anything, they desired in life.

We can learn from these men—who did not ask money for their tuition, but rather gave food and clothing to their pupils, the real art of psychological training and development.

Success in worldly life, efficiency in business—the art and science of management, requires careful and systematic training—not merely of the intellect but of both the intellect and the soul. In devising, therefore, practical courses for our future rulers and pioneers, we should take from India, its ideals of truth, sacrifice, activity and psychological training of men, as a whole

In spite of modern worry, we should be optimists. The world is better and richer to-day. The future will make it happier and nobler. This future calls every man and woman to stand up and to do his little bit for the heralding of that glorious life.

Let us be men of faith. Let us be men of character. Let us be men of powerful feelings and let us concentrate all our

energies and powers for the service of humanity, making each day better than its predecessor.

For realisation of this life of love and light, for attainment of this goal—we want a new education, an education that looks up not for gifts of the earth, but for the infinite blessings of a dedicated life. Truth is light and its bright rays bring in joy and harmony. Let there be happiness and peace all over the globe, and let the light of a new education inspire men and women all over the globe, with a new religion of love and service.

Buddha and His Gospel.

Of all the luminaries of the past, Buddha has the greatest appeal to the modern mind. He is essentially modern in out-look and pragmatic in his view of life. He is rational to the core of his heart. His philosophy is one of clear thought and has no hazy mysticism round about it. But at the same time his religion has the greatest power to move, as it contains a lofty ethical idealism.

His life is a beautiful one Born of royal parents, he spent his youth amidst the splendours of luxury, but to his soft heart, the burden and misery of the world, the unintelligeble enigma of life came as a heavy weight. He keenly felt the transient character of every thing in life and longed for a solution, that will satisfy the deepest problems of existence

Impressed by the uncertainty of life and urged on by deep love for humanity, he renounced the world. He abandoned his loving wife, his newborn son and the royal throne and became a wandering hermit The people of the West fail to understand and appreciate the beauty and grandeur of this step. The life in a retreat according to the Eastern ideal is the surest way for the attainment of the highest truths Truth does not itself reveal to the man of culture—it dawns into the heart of the seeker in a rare moment of spiritual insight.

He tried first to know the ultimate truths by philosophical discussion but the subtle philosophic thought did not satisfy his cravings. He, therefore, took to the life of penance. He practised austerities. for full six years but no light came and he was throughly convinced of the futility of asceticism. He began to meditate and soon came to his purified mind the long-sought-for illumination. He felt that he had discovered the right solution of the mysteries of life. He had attained the goal of his quest and he became the Buddha—the enlightened.

There is no metaphysical subtlety in the light that Buddha got. It is a gospel of life—a life of love and service. In her spiritual quest, India forgot to attach proper values to human life on earth. Buddha came and stressed upon the beauty and dignity of ordinary life.

Buddha preached, no doubt, that life is endless suffering. But in doing this, he did not look up to some unknown and unknowable God for power and inspiration. He saw that there is the burden of misery—there is the tyranny of pain, but this does not make him pessimistic. He asks us to make this life on earth richer and nobler, purer and sweeter by a strict discipline. Perfection is possible and there is goodness behind the veil of darkness, so life should be a ceaseless striving for the good.

Buddhism does not preach cynicism. It does not make men despondent and hopeless His is not a doctrine of worthlessness of life His is the clarion call to duty. He asks his followers to revolt against evil and build an order of goodness and nobleness by a life of service and sacrifice.

Buddha is thus a modern of the moderns. He is the worshipper of life, life as we know and he does not care for a

metaphysical soul nor promises joy in the life-beyond. He preaches that life is not worth living as it is. We must bring in purity and holiness in the heat and dust of life and make it higher and sweeter. When life is turned with a mission of love and charity, it gains its true value. We have enough of sorrows and the burden seems to weigh upon us but still through everything truth triumphs and goodness grows. Human endeavour should be aimed at the birth of this progress—the progress that leads to perfection.

Before Buddha, ritualism was the order of the day. The Vedic people had made an art of ceremonialism. There were minute details and intricate formalities by means of which they believed they would overpower the mysterious forces of nature. There were a few, who renounced the world and believed, that the ultimate would be known and the highest peace would be won by religious austerities in the forest. Buddha preached that both methods—the path of ritualism and the path of penance, are ineffectual.

Truth is felt and won in our ordinary life and he devised a path which would make this work-a-day life blessed and pure. This is known as the noble Aryan path.

He avoided the extremes of sensuality and self mortification and found out a middle way that leads to peace and enlightenment. The noble eightfold path consists of right views, right aspirations, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right rapture.

Human existence is a weary round of pain. Death, decay and disease come with its curse. Union with the unpleasant is painful, painful is separation from the pleasant, and any craving that is unsatisfied—that too is painful.

Thus far, it is outward discipline. We get inner discipline through right effort, right thinking and right meditation. We must control our passions in order to have intuitive illumination.

The last step is meditation which brings to the seeker, the tranquil grace which is the gospel of Buddhism. It is the endeavour to be lost in truth in contemplation of the highest and it would bring self-possession and tranqulity.

Buddha was silent about the ultimate reality. There is no place of God in his religion. In Udana. VIII. 3. there is a speech of Buddha which suggests that he believed that there was an abiding reality behind the perpetual flux of life. It says "There is an unborn, an unoriginated, an un-made, an uncompounded, were there not, O mendicants, there would be no escape from the world of the born, the originated, the made, and of the compounded." But whatever the purport of this may be, it is certain that the grace of God is no factor in human life. Buddha discerned the law—the inexorable law that guides our destiny. Man is what he is by this law of Karma and by his Karma alone, he can be what he wishes to be. It seems strange to us that a religion which has no God to inspire, no spell to worship to move the heart, would capture the minds of men from one end of Asia to the other end.

There is something heroic and grand in his appeal to man to develop the immense possibilities that lie hidden in each man. Buddhism is a religion of self-culture-- It is a creed of self-development. Man can progress by effort and will. Buddha laid great stress on individual sadhana. His last sermon to Ananda is a fervant appeal to personal effort and discipline. He says—"Be ye lamps unto yourselves, be ye refuge

to yourselves, betake yourselves to no external refuge, hold fast to the truth as a lamp, hold fast as a refuge to the truth, look not for refuge to any one besides yourselves".

The words are strong, but they come from a noble heart, that has experienced the truth of it, in the splendour of his insight. The Buddhist ideal of perfect life seems too bold to many. A religion, that is entirely free from anthropomorphic bias, an ideal that breaks down the vanity of man by giving up the theory of soul, was r[illegible]ar in advance of his age—an age noted for its achieve[illegible] and progress. People may naturally ask what would be t[illegible]piration of the moral life, advocated by the great master.

Buddha's message was one of co-ordiation of moral activity, emotional culture and intellectual strength. Perfect happiness is the aim of life, but it is attained not by developing egoism but by suppressing selfishness.

This is to be done by the development of universal consciousness and in this ideal, Buddhism and the Upanishadas merge together. Life in diversity is life in death. There is an organic unity in all that is in the universe. We are to realise our oneness with the universe and true salvation consists in this union in freedom and love.

The goal of Buddha is the goal of all the seekers of truth of India. The theist craves the satisfaction that comes from worship and intuitive experience of the divine love but the Buddhist craves the fullness that comes from the expansion of mind in human love and sympathy. Both ultimately attain the peace and joy, that comes from the realisation of our unity with the world.

The difference between Buddhism and the ordinary Hinduism, is therefore a difference only in outlook. Buddha

changed the angle of vision and established love and universal benevolence in place of sacrifice and ceremonial worship. There is a thrilling grandeur in his ideal of elevated morality—there is a compelling appeal in his stress upon the practice of goodness The modern mind is sure to derive inspiration and solace from the sweet majesty of his law of love The vitality of Buddhism is as fresh today, as it was on the day when the noble utterances were uttered by the great teacher.

This is an age of machine and life is becoming machine-like, joyless and heartless. The immense greed of our economic life is making humanity sick and diseased. What is needed is a greater spiritualisation of life—a spiritualisation that is at once noble and practical, appealing and elevating Buddha's gospel has this magic power

Of all the prophets of the past, Buddha alone can stir us to our depths and transport us beyond ourselves with a stimulating conception of humanity, and the ideal of selfless service for its progress His life and teachings shine even now with a steady splendour to gladden our weary souls. His gospel can soothe our sorrows and appease our troubles and his faith can sustain us in the midst of world chaos. I end with the words of the great teacher uttered before his decease :—

> "Who wearies not, but holds fast
> to this truth and law, shall cross
> this sea of life, and shall make
> an end of grief."

Was Buddha an Atheist ?

Buddha stands as a lone star in the sky of Indian philosophy, brilliant in lustre, and radiant in his life work, but apart from other seekers of truth There was such a violent reaction against his creed and mission, that he is almost forgotten in the land of his birth. It is only Joydeva, the eloquent Bengali poet that deifies him and places him as one of the ten incarnations of God. But the great life, the great sacrifices and the lofty teachings of Buddha are little known to his country-men.

One cannot but wonder at such a fate of such a great man People ordinarily have a ready answer to satisfy the curiosity of the enthusiast enquirer. He was an atheist and this is why he was driven out The author of the Bishnupurana goes so far as to suggest that he preached atheism in order to mislead Asuras. Popular misconceptions die hard and it is no wonder that Buddha is regarded by many intelligent and educated men as a materialist, a hedonist and an atheist.

The common belief is that Buddha's religion was regarded as heresy, because he did not uphold the ritualism of the Vedas. It was no doubt true that Buddha was no believer in ceremonialism and he decried the same but the attitude of Krishna in the Divine Song is similar. He also spoke ill

of idle rites and meaningless sacrifices, but Buddha was styled as Tathagata, *one who transmitted the Ancient Wisdom* and as such he unified the teachings that went before him, which as we learn from the Brahma-jala-sutta, he had thoroughly studied and made a noble synthesis, by his life of discipline and meditation. It is, therefore, that he asked his disciples to follow in the foot-steps of the Rishis and praises the learned man who is deeply versed in the Vedas in his famous Dhammapada. As a matter of fact, Buddha did not disregard the lofty teachings of the Jnanamarga—the path of knowledge of the Vedas He assimilated the same and reproduced their teachings in superb parables and in simple but inspiring language of the people. He was against platitudes, he did not like mere verbiage, but he insisted on real insight He taught his disciples not to accept any tradition, nor any teachings on its face value but admonished them to gain immediate intuitive apprehension of truth In this, he is one with the Seers of Upanishads It is therefore, wrong to call Buddha an Atheist ; merely because he did not uphold sacrifices where animal-slaughter was a need.

Others say that Buddha did not believe in the Brahma nor in the soul, that he rather believed like the present scientists that life and mind are mere by-products of the world process and that there is no reality behind the phenomena of the world The Universe is immense. The vastness of the starry universe shows how insignificant is man in comparison with the huge scheme of things But this philosophy does not satisfy the individual man. He is the centre of the Universe, as far as he himself is concerned and therefore he wants an answer to the puzzling question what is the significance of life of man in this infinite universe, a small fragment of which is so far as it is known to be the home of man. Religion and faith solved this doubt, but the scientist who

accepts the mechanical interpretation of the world does not understand the ultimate reality which is beyond his reach and scoffs at it.

Buddha was strangely scientific in outlook and in his analysis of world problems, but it is not true that he was a materialist. He did not see in Matter the promise and poetry of Life. He was moved by the ceaseless sufferings that he saw and felt. To his enlightened mind, it appeared that birth is suffering, old age is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, sorrow, pain, worry and lust are sufferings. It is suffering, to have union with the unpleasant and so is separation from the present In a word, human life is unending sorrow. This Pessimism coloured his teachings but did not turn him to be a Nihilist, did not make him a hopeless rebel. He discovered the way in the limitless sea of Misery and spoke out in words of beauty and sweetness :—

"Ye are not bound. The soul of things is sweet :
The Heart of Being is celestial rest
Stronger than woe is will ; that which was good,
Doth pass to Better—Best "

The light of Asia. Book VIII.

Buddha did not actually believe that death is the annihilation of man He believed in after-life, believed in re-incarnation and believed in an unborn, uncreated, unbecome, unevolved reality, out of which the universe is born is become, is created and evolved. This Reality is indefinable, inscrutable and beyond language, so that he believed it to be immeasurable It is for this reason that he generally maintained a discreet silence on these high philosophical topics and advised his followers to follow the path of progress and not to dabble in vain metaphysical fightings He has rightly said :—

Who asks, doth err
Who answers, errs. Say Naught."

But this silence does not indicate as many have wrongly conjectured that he did not believe.

In the Majjhima Nikaya, we get a list of the undetermined questions, which the Tathagata did not determine, not because they are profound and unknowable, but because they do not bring advantage, do not advance religious life, nor do they tend to aversion, absence of passion, cessation, calm comprehension, enlightenment from Nirvana. It is not as Edward. U. Thomas says, Spencerian agnosticism but merely exclusion from investigation certain definite problems of life, which have no value and purpose to the practical seeker of the good life

There are divergent views between the Buddhist schools as to the nature of self This is because what Buddha taught was subtle and deep and left room for the development of divergences of opinion Buddha's concern was to show the way for freedom from pain and misery. The surest remedy for the same is to have absence of desire and our wrong conception of the self is the greatest impediment to the attainment of this goal. All misery arises from the delusion of self, which causes man to gratify his longings, to strive for the welfare of his own self and to cause injury to others.

Buddha does this by his logical analysis. An individual consists of the five groups, known as Skandhas: the body (Rupa), feeling (Vedana), perception (Sanja), the aggregates (sanskara) and consciousness (vijnana). Just as a chariot is merely an appellation of the totality of chariot-pole, axle, wheels, frames, and banner-pole, so the empirical individual is constituted of the above five aggregates.

But, in spite of this analysis there is no express contradiction of the Vedantic conception of *Atman*. On the other hand, the Buddhist conception of Pudgala served for all practical purposes, the Hindu ideal of self. The Sutra of the burden bears to analozy this view of the effect itself. It is to be found in the famous Samyutta Nikaya There are the bearer the of burden, the burden, the taking up of the burden and the laying down of the burden. The burden is the five aggregaten which bring about our intense clinging to existence.

It is desire which takes up a burden and when one is freed from desire, he can lay aside the burden which is borne by the Pudgala, the individual person. This individual gets enlightenment by following the noble way, shown by the Tathagata, lays aside the heavy burden of desire, does not take up another and thus gets deliverance from the never-ending chain of causation and attains Nirvana. This has been explained away by some Buddhist scholars , but no impartial reader can say from the text that the aggregates are the bearer. This is regarded as one of the most authentic text and we cannot but say that Buddha believed in soul His conception of ego and non-ego appears to be contradictory on its face, but on a truer understanding, it cannot but be said that he believed in an underlying reality, behind the non-ego This self is called the witness of good and evil in the Dhammapada, The continuity in the individual can be explained only on the assumption of the above underlying reality

The dialogue between the Vacchagotta and Buddha throws a flood-light on the attitude of Buddha on this point When Vacchagotto asks Buddha whether the self exists or not, he remains silent. He explains his reticence to Ananda. To assert its existence would mean the acceptance of the view

of the adherents of permanency. To deny the self would mean that a man is utterly annihilated on death and the religious life for purification to attain deliverance has no meaning The assertion of the existence of self moreover would not enable Vacchagotta to realise that the empirical world is essentially not self. A denial would have caused confusion leading him to believe that he had no existence before and has none now. Buddha laid stress on the perpetual flux and advised his pupils to save themselves from desire and thereby attain complete rest,—without bothering themselves with subtle metaphysical questions.

Next we shall come to the Buddhist conception of Godhead Buddha was silent as to the absolute reality. But in Udana, we find a passage which proves in unequivocal language that he believed in the reality of some thing over and above the empirical world "There is an unborn, an unoriginated, an unmade, an uncompounded, were there not, O mendicants, there would be no escape from the world of the born, the originated, the made and of the compounded." This text is sufficient indication of Buddha's belief in an abiding reality. But in his religion, there is no place for God. He does not insist on the grace of God for the ultimate realisation and deliverance His clarion call was to the man himself to exert his utmost and thereby attain release through moral excellence and ethical endeavours. But this does not mean that he had no belief in the ultimate absolute reality, for as he says, without such a background, his conception of freedom becomes meaningless The sages of the Upanishads gave stress upon the intellectual solution of the riddle of the universe, but Buddha's follower, who seeks liberation, must accept the duty of a strict moralist. Because of this insistence on the good conduct, on moral values, on the sublimity of ethical

life, he forbade his pupils to indulge in idle and vain questions regarding the insoluble metaphysical problems.

Last we come to the Buddhist theory of Nirvana. The ascetic Malunkyaputta asked Buddha whether a Tathagata exists after death. Buddha did not answer him. He refused to say whether he exists and whether he does not exist, or whether he is non-existent and not non-existent after death. His explanation was that this was of no value. It does not bring enlightenment and Nirvana There is an interesting dialogue between king Prasenjit and the nun Khema in which she said that the refusal of the Tathagata was, because the state of Nirvana was deep and ineffable.

"Even so, O King, that body, by which one might define a Tathagata is relinquished, cut off at the root, uprooted like a palm tree, or brought to not, does not arise in the future. Freed from the designation of body, a Tathagata is deep, immeasurable, unfathomable as the Ocean." This assertion of the deep and profound nature of the Tathagata was illustrated by the imposibility of counting the sands of the Ganges or measuring the water of the ocean.

Nirvana is not therefore total extinction. It would be an error to think as Yamaka did in believing that a monk free from asavas is cut off, destroyed and utterly annihilated. Sariputta asked Yamaka whether the true self of the Tathagata is his material form and gets a negative answer. He further asks him whether the Tathagata is the body or in the body or other than the body and similarly of the other constituents, whether the five constituents taken up together make up him or whether he is without them all In each case, the monk gives a denial and Sariputta explains that even in this life, a Tathagata cannot be comprehended in truth and reality, or it is absurd to say that a monk free from the Asavas is cut off

destroyed and does not exist after death. A Tathagata is ineffable in life as is he in death.

People generally think Nirvana to be total extinction, because of its association with fire. The passing away of the enlightened one is illustrated by the simile of flame. The Suttanipata says :—

"As the flame, blown by the force of the wind, does go out and can be named no more, even so no sage, liberated from individuality goes out and can be named no more." The flame ceases to appear but is not utterly destroyed for its return to the original unmanifested form. It ceases to be visible, but it does not mean annihilation

Nirvana is therefore not a negative conception of distinction It is a positive attainment. It brings with it the happiness of the highest order. In the Udana we get ;—

"There is a stage, where there is neither earth nor water nor fire nor wind, nor the stage of the infinity of space, nor the stage of infinity of consciousness, nor the stage of nothingness, nor the stage of neither consciousness nor non-consciousness. There is not this world, nor the other world, nor sun and moon. That, O monks ! I call neither coming nor going, nor staying, nor passing away, nor arising ; without support or going on basis is it. This is the end of pain." In the Millindapanha we get that Nirvana is utter bliss. Its form, figure, duration of size cannot be explained. It is infinite and satisfies all desires and can be attained by freedom from distress and danger, by peace, calm, bliss, delicacy and sweetness.

The utterly transcendental character of Nirvana is beautifully expressed in many other Buddhist texts It is without

limits or measure. It is the timeless Absolute. When he got enlightenment, Buddha realised the essence of the phenomena and what is transphenomenal, that is which lies beyond the reach of thought and consciousness. Nirvana is quiescence but it is not the peace of Death. It is surely true that there are expressions in his sermons which talk of cessation, disappearance and extinction. But these negative terms are used only in the intention to negate the phenomenal character of Nirvana. One should not and one surely cannot fail to understand that the supreme bliss of Nirvana is something positive.

It is realised through supreme knowledge. The realisation is the goal of life, for it frees man from the bondage of all his past deeds, natural passions and sufferings The illusion of ego is destroyed and with the passing away of this illusion, goes the sting of death and one enjoys the bliss of immortality. The individual merges into a higher Reality

As Nirvana is indescribable in terms of finite consciousness, Buddha maintained a strict and austere silence in the matter, which however has produced such an enigmatic puzzle to the seekers of all ages.

But if we understand and appreciate his attitude, it would be clear beyond all dispute that Buddha was not an Atheist He was, in the words of Mrs Rhys Davids, the greatest of the Hindus, who made the deepest mysteries of Vedic culture, common heritage of the entire mankind.

The Essence of Buddhism

Despite the myth of scientific criticism and objective study, our interpretation of any thing is relative It is peculiarly our own. Buddhism has, therefore, been studied from different angles in accordance with the aptitudes and intellectual vigilance of the different scholars.

There is, however, ample warrant for the view that to get an adequate knowledge of Buddhism, we must study the Buddha-lore on the background of Indian religion and culture. We must know the environment in which he was born, the habits of thought and action, which moulded him and the burning questions of his age.

Buddha transcended the age in which he lived, gave startlingly new answers to many problems, but yet we must place him in his proper historical perspective. If we do so oith the right historic sense, we shall see that Buddha is not the rebel child of Hinduism, as Swami Vivekananda called him but that he is the greatest Indian that was ever born.

He characterised his Dhamma as ancient and eternal (*Purana* and *Sanatana*). The central thesis of Buddhism is that character is the essence of religious life Human conduct righteous behaviour, reflection and meditation lead the way to the unfolding of insight, 'the attainment, comprehending and realizing even in this life emancipation of heart and

emancipation of insight' Vain metaphysical questions were avoided by him because he was convinced that we gain nothing by devoting our time and energy to the unfathomable mysteries of life—truths which are incomprehensible by intellect, and ethically unimportant. Buddha was silent as to the ultimate problems which are unknowable. He recognised the limits of human knowledge and discouraged his disciples to fathom the depths of the unknown. A man who is struck with an arrow should know how to take it out—it is no concern of him to know all about the thrower. Life is full of miseries. There are sorrows and sufferings and to the ordinary mind there is no escape from the tyranny of pain. To this sorrow-laden life, Buddha brought the message of the right way of life.

All that we are is the result of what we have thought and done. Every act has its significance in life. As we sow, so we shall reap. We live in a world of hard facts. The ordinary man is bewildered by the heterogenous elements that play their parts in his life. But in a true sense, we live in the world of our thoughts.

It is said in the Dhammapada that the mental natures are the outcome of what we have thought, chieftained by our thoughts and are made up of our thoughts We, therefore, change our life by a change in our thoughts and thereby mould the character of the world.

A life of strict morality is enjoined by Buddha. He is not in favour of codes and conventions, rites and ceremonies. There is a story how Buddha retorted when a Brahmin spoke to him about the virtues attendant on a bath in the river Bahuka. He said that no bath would purify the fool of his sin, even though he bathed as many times as he would wish. The doer of evil, the man of malice, and the perpe-

trator of crime is never absolved of his sin by baths. One must have his bath in good character. He should be kind to all beings, should kill no life, should speak no falsehood and should be secure in self-denial. One who is virtuous, any water is Phalgu water to him.

This life of virtue and moral earnestness is no gift of anybody. As Sir Edwin Arnold puts it :—

Seek nought from the helpless gods by gift and hymn,
Nor bribe with blood, nor feed with fruits and cakes,
Within yourselves, deliverance must be sought ;
Each man his poison makes.

Buddha considered himself to be a mere path finder. He is the eye of the world because he is the model, people must follow but he is particular that none should deify him, It will be an error to regard Buddha's teachings as just a mere ethical system, as merely *sila*. To a visitor, Buddha declared that the End of the Universe (*Lokasya Antam*) cannot be reached by mere walking. Life's miseries cease only when one reaches the end of the universe. The end of the universe is that abode, where none is born, none lives the mortal life, none dies, none drops from one state of existence and reappears in another

The universe, however, lies within the man. The final and radical cure of all the ills and evils of life is obtained by one who reaches the *Lokasya Antam*.

The universe is really not in outside space, but within one's personality—within one's own consciousness. We have our perception of the universe through the five sense-organs and all that we know is the combination of five elements of colour, sound, odour, flavour and touch. Our feelings are a net

round about these sense perceptions and create the universe as we feel it, as we know it and as we understand it. The final emancipation, by whatever name you may call it, is also a consciousness. It is attained by the spiritually perfect person. It is the blissful end, for which every one must strive. It is the bliss of union with the whole and the chain of causation is broken for ever and there is no rebirth.

The inexpressible charactor of this final attainment has been beautifully described in the Udana

For there is a sphere where there is the knower who has discovered the path to perfection and made it possible for his desciples to walk in his footsteps. But he is no god, he is no mediator and accordingly his last advice to his followers was to work out their salvation with diligence Here there is no dependence on grace. Man is to have his salvation by his own efforts. None can prevail against him if he conquers himself.

On his death-bed, Ananda, his cousin and constant companion, asked him about instructions regarding the Buddhist Order and the Buddha answered : "Be ye lamps unto yourselves, be a refuge to yourself , betake yourselves to no external refuge. Hold fast as a refuge to the truth , look not for refuge to any one besides yourselves "

This self-abnegation on his part made him the beloved leader, whom countless millions worship and revere. He is not a mythical figure. The canonical books give the students, inspite of colouring here or there, genuine history of a master mind, whose spiritual depths and moral strength, discreet intellectual reserve and infinite compassion have made him the greatest saviour of the world.

Buddha claims to show the way, by which every sincere seeker after truth can, with full certainty, find that boundless and everlasting happiness, which every human heart so desires You can verify his claim by following the path shown by him He has given us the most clear and explicit directions as to how we can obtain this goal of life. There is no vagueness, no mystery about the marga chalked out by him With heroic courage and strength, mankind should embrace the Dhamma, which fulfills your questions and satisfies you with its scientific and reasonable outlook

The Buddhist Nirvana is the blissfull goal of life. It is no annihilation, it is no extinction, it is not nothingness. It is a spiritual state of incomprehensible security, attainable in this life and and compatible with social and intellectual work

What is extinguished in Nirvana is the fire of lust, of hatred and of cravings and desires .Nirvana is something positive which can be experienced though not described It is supremely beatific. It is not merely absence or annihilation of passions, but it is eternal, transcendental, supreme, realizable and unique.

If one studies the texts with care, the necessary conclusion is that the state of Nirvana is realised through supreme knowledge It confers deliverance from all the ills and evils of life It takes away from man, his inexplicable illusion of the ego and thereby leads the devotees to immortality. Silence is golden in this matter for, to say anything about it would be to make it relational and finite

The way to Nirvana is really the path to awakening and perfect knowledge is the only way to it, and when we have it, the transcendental illusion of avidya is removed for ever. "Neither earth nor water, light nor air, neither infinity of space

nor infinity of consciousness, nor nothingness nor perception, nor absence of perception, neither this world nor that world, both sun and moon I call it neither coming nor going, nor standing, neither motion nor rest, neither death nor birth. It is without stability, without procession, without a footing. That is the end of Sorrows".

In the Mahabharata, there is a sloka which says: The foot prints of birds that fly in the sky, and of fish that swim in water are not seen, so is the going of them who have won knowledge fully The same idea is stated in the Dhammapada verses 91 & 92. There we get the description of the Arhat and it is said, that those who have no accumulation, who eat according to knowledge, who have perceived the nature of release and unconditioned freedom, their path is difficult to understand, like the flight of birds through the sky.

Herein lies the real mystery of Buddha's silence. In his answers to the curious, he did not disclose the condition of the released person. Having no perceptible sign and being infinite and transcendental, this consciousness of one who has got illumination is utterly untraceable not only in death but even while he is living in his mortal body here on the earth.

Buddha is, therefore no nihilist. There is really no agnosticism in his utterances. With his keen intellectual grasp he realised that everything on earth is mutable and contingent, everything is passing and fleeting but he did not end his quest there. He experienced the absolute and immutable good but knowing the maxim that whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent, he did not indulge in doctrinal controversies

Buddha was not a dialectician. Truth was a sacred achievement to him which should be realised in our own under-

standing. Let us today, in this world of strife and hatred, revive his lofty and noble teachings Personal effort and personal realization are the key-notes to the paths of religion For this a life of purity, honest endeavour and noble aspiration are necessary. Let us give up theories, let us eschew controversies, but let us have practice of vitrtues

His call was a clarion call to the whole of humanity. His appeal was not to the intellectuals only, but even to the downtrodden masses. Let us follow in his footsteps and go to the common people with noble and great ideas

Let us tell the man behind the plough, the worker behind the machine, the poor who suffer the burden of life, that the royal road to sweetness and culture, to bliss and freedom, is by the practice of virtues Following his lead, who brought to men, a realisation of their own divinity, let us adopt the attractive spiritual life with courage and conviction Let us stick to his advice in the Dhammapada; We live happily then, hating none in the midst of men who hate, we dwell free from hate among men who hate.

The Buddhist Way of Life

Humanity in the course of its long history had tried to find out a way to the solution of the knotty problems of life. Religious leaders have arrived in different climes and in different ages to show us the way to ultimate happiness. The ultimate happiness has been called Salvation, Mukti, Moksa and Nirvana.

The Buddhist way guides us to Nirvana and many wrongly think and believe that it is a state of annihilation and it is no good. But if we bear in mind the Hindu conception of liberation, we shall find that Buddha was echoing the Upanisadic view in his own way. In the Majjhima Nikaya, Sutra 72, Buddha says :—"Profound, measureless is he who has found the truth, profound even as the mighty ocean, the term reborn does not apply to him, nor not reborn, nor any combination of such terms. Everything by which the truth-finder might be denoted has passed away from him and for ever." When, therfore, Buddha was questioned about the final attainment, he used to keep utter silence because in his view, to affirm that the liberated continued to exist would give rise to one misunderstanding, while to deny it would give rise to others The Arhat, who has attained Nirvana, attains an incomprehensible and inexpressible state.

Yajnavalkya, the great seer and the supreme Vedantist speaks in the same vein in the Brhadaranyaka Upanisad

While explaining the state of final liberation to his beloved wife, Maitreyi, the sage says, "If you drop a lump of salt into water, it would dissolve and mix with water You cannot pick it forth again But each and every particle of water would taste salty. So truly the Great Being, endless and limitless, is one mass of consciousness The separate self comes out from these elements and into them it vanishes. Having passed beyond, there is no more separate consciousness" The wife is bewildered, because she cannot comprehend this loss of separate consciousness. The great seer, therefore, explains that where there is duality, there one has separate consciousness, but where every thing has become the one self, whom and by what should one see, hear or think? None can know the universal Knower. None can know that by which there is consciousness of the All."

It appears, therefore, that the ultimate Goal is the same in both the Upanisadic conception and the Buddhist view. When a man is freed from all the limitations of name and form, when he has ceased to be a separate self, it is not possible to say of him that he exists or does not exist When the consciousness ceases to identify itself with any particular self, strictly speaking, it has no existence, but its real being does not cease, so it is misleading at the same time to say that it does not exist But to the disciple, in the path of knowledge, Buddha's advice was that he should not waste time on discussing things which are beyond His was a practical religion and he wanted to heal the sick, instead of long and tedious wrangling over useless queries

In a simple way, he taught that there is suffering in this life However one may try, he cannot escape the ills of life Men are subject to unhappiness, to sufferings by the very fact that they are born. We do not get what we hanker for, we get

things we do not want. This suffering has a cause and desire is the root of all sufferings There is however, no reason for despair because the sorrows and sufferings of life may end and one can have harmony, peace and unity in life. There is a way for the cessation of the evils and ills of life and Buddha claims himsels to be this pathfinder

A pragmatic thinker as he was, Buddha pointed out his noble path of deliverance in a clear and logical way. Buddha explains that our birth is the cause of all our sufferings. If we were not born, then there would have been no chance of our suffering. We are born because we have attachment for life This attachment is due to the lure of desire. Desire results from our association with the world in our past lives We have this association through our five senses and mind, whose works ultimately form the cause of ignorance. The promptings of desire and ignorance must cease, before we can have deliverance from the bonds of life

He chalked out an eight-fold path for the attainment of lasting peace and harmony. These are known as right understanding, right resolve, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right recollection and right concentration.

At the very outset of the path, we must see distinctly, we must know correctly and thus we can hope to aspire to the world of beauty and harmony, to the domain of abiding peace and security for the world of strife and discord

The Right Insight into the mysteries of life discloses that the bliss of harmony and knowledge is not our lot here in this earth. We are surrounded on all sides by the fire of unhappiness. This flame has been lighted by desire. Desire has no satiety, the more you get, the more you desire. There can be no permanent satisfaction for all things are fleeting

and changing. Realising the futility of all personal desires, we must wake up for their utter eradication and uprooting from the want. In this great task, we have the help and guidance of the enlightened Buddha.

One who understands, understands these four noble truths, first, that there is unhappiness, secondly that there is a cause for that, thirdly that there can be cessation of sorrows and sufferings, and fourthly that there is a path for putting an end to unhappiness

The second step is really the first step of discipline It is a turning point in the life of the disciple He must change his attitude towards life One who realises that life is transient and unsubstantial, develops the attitude of non-attachment. With particular resolution one should try to separate himself from all clingings to life. By long and arduous training, one must withdraw himself and sever his bonds of identification with the world. This is the negative attitude of resolve. The positive attitude is one of love and compassion We must cultivate goodwill towards all other living beings We should not shrink away any more Hatred and jealousy separate us from others and cause untold worries and anxieties but once we try to have love, all that is ugly melts away in an atmosphere of sweetness We must not only love but would serve others One who does not harm but helps others moves rightly in the straight path of upward journey.

The third divison of the noble path is called Right Speech. It is not merely speaking sweet and gentle words. It is giving up of the four-fold falsehood One must practice speech that is true and kindly, that is courteous and sensible. One must not take recourse to frivolity

One who hides the truth and proclaims the untruth is guilty of the first kind of falsehood. He who causes the wrath of

somebody by reporting the words of another is equally guilty of falsehood. One who speaks harsh and unkind words commits the third kind of falsehood. A flatterer who wants to please one by false but pleasant statements is guilty also of lying.

The fourth step in the path of the initiate is Right Action. It is true, certain and without falsehood that the attainment of perfect felicity in the result of good deeds. Grey is all theory, green grows the tree of life alone. Leaving aside metaphysics, one must devote oneself to noble actions. To this noble striving Buddha adds a few positive ordinances. One must not kill any living being. There can be freedom, happiness or peace, only when there is boundless love In the scheme, there is no scope for killing. The serene poise of moral life comes to him who does not kill and who does not steal. A disciple should refrain from unlawful gratification of the sexual impulse and also from partaking of intoxicating liquors or drugs One must rise from real enslavement to the senses, to the real freedom of right action, when love and benevolence, service and goodwill bring us true freedom and true peace.

The fifth step in the Aryan path is Right Living Only in a life that is lived in harmony with the higher principles can we have progress in our upward moral journey. One should maintain oneself by doing things which cause no injury to anybody. Right livelihood is one that is earned by a life of love and peaceful adjustment with our environments It may be categorically affirmed that one who seeks food in the right path gets it, because to the unselfish, the world becomes a source of unity and peace The sixth division in his illuminating path is called Right Effort It is a way of mind and body culture. One must endeavour his best to drive away evil thoughts from his mind. By practice, he

should try to cause good thoughts to arise in his mind He should further increase and strengthen the high thoughts that are already in his mind.

It is not that he is to become a mere introverted dreamer of dreams, helpless before the practical problems of life The distorting glasses of desire and aversion shall break and by right exercise, he should withdraw his self-projections from the objects of sense and try to drive into the ocean of bliss by increasing and extending feelings of love and compassion

Right Recollection is the last but one step in the path of deliverance It is further development of mind He must fix his attention upon things, that are happening around him and should realise that nothing is permanent but that everything is in a perpetual flux. The chain of cause and effect binds together all the events and occurrences of life This understanding of the emptiness of things breaks the illusion of the world and we are thereby able to discard our attachment to it.

The last step in the path is Right Concentration. By deep meditation, the desciple understands that mind is all that there is, that everything is made of mind, so that if he can free his mind from suffering, suffering ceases and he attains Nirvana here in this very world The Buddha's way of life is a transmutation of our being and is accomplished in a living experience of love and harmony Beyond is the tremendous brooding calm of the transcendant Nirvana in which one lives by withdrawing his mind from all external things.

The path is not as easy as it seems. It is sharp as the edge of a razor. But it has the advantage that it is logical

and clear and can satisfy the dubious modern mind. This path is not merely ethical idealism. Buddha laid greater emphasis on living than metaphysical discussion. The eight-fold path offers a world of rich and vivid psychological experience.

While celebrating the Buddha Jayanti, we should realise the fundamental unity of Indian spiritual discipline. Realisation is the key note of our sadhana and in this Buddha is one with the other teachers of our ancient culture. When we appreciate this, we also understand much better the deeper meanings of Hinduism and Buddhism.

Buddha gave us a series of practicable and workable techniques for living a beautiful and successful life. When we pin our faith in him, we know a path of deliverance, a path that helps us to win victory over defeat.

The suggested techniques are to be followed in life and are to be practised until you obtain the desired results Mere reading is of no value. Each and every method is to be tested in the laboratory of spiritual experience. By practical demonstrations in your personal life, you are to become a true disciple of the great teacher, our brother and comforter.

Believe in yourself. Absorb the teachings of the master. You are sure to enjoy a delightful new sense of well-being You will experience a new and keen pleasure in living. Expansion, delight and amazing usefulness are yours, if you follow his formula of belief and practice.

The Spirit of the Hindu Law

Law is an organism. It lives and grows with social needs It is to be found in the most primitive society in some form or other, for without rules, general rules of human conduct, no society can exist Law is thus a power, a force and a otency that is a characteristic mark of human society A study of its evolution, growth and development gives us the best picture of human social life

Hindu law has had a history, a history of progress and adjustment, that is unbroken in its continuity for six milleniums Generalisation, therefore, is risky in the case of Hindu law But still there are certain broad features which can be discussed and commented upon, for the enlightment of the general readers and for removal of many misconceptions that cling round it To the Jurists of the West, law has its appeal in the aspect of command. Hindu law was aware of this essential feature, but it rightly did not give it the supreme place. Law has for its object the benefit and protection of society and is the immediate product of social conditions to keep up the equilibrium of society. Unless there be anything to enforce the law, it loses its meaning and significance, but still this sanction is not the essence of law.

The Hindu Jurists were inspired by a lofty idealism, which they tried to grasp by logical analysis, the ultimate basis of

law. Viewing all things in their right proportion, they discovered that there is an all comprehensive power that regulates life Law too, should be moulded with an eye to this ordered whole. Law is therefore called *Dharma* which etymologically means that which sustains Law is that which sustains life. Life to the Indian seers had its truth and fulfilment in blessed union with the Absolute. Law, therefore, is inspired by this ideal. It does not aim merely at peace but also at progress—progress of humanity towards a richer life and a sweeter harmony.

Looked at from the highest standpoint, Law blends with morality and religion, which also attempt to give to the individual, knowledge and attainment of his real unity with the comprehensive whole.

Law, ethics and religion, from this angle of view, aim at gradual realisation of man's destiny which is consecration of human life by divine bliss

But this should not lead us to the common error that Hindu Law is a mixture of law, social duty and priestcraft.

Kautilya's Arthasastra, which is a work of 4th century B. C. is the clearest evidence on the point. It proves unmistakably that the distinction between moral precepts and legal rules was clearly known to the ancient Hindus. The Mahabharata and the Manusamhita, which are works older than Kautilya by nearly a millenium know of this distinction

Bhisma, the grand old man of Kurukshetra, while explaining the duties of a king to Yudhisthira, says in a striking passage that Vyabahara i e. law is the Veda of the Kings. The canon law of penances and sacraments owes authority to the Vedas and Smritis and aims at spiritual values, but the civil

law of the king is based on the power of the king. This secular law has truth for its soul and welfare for its goal. The secular law of the king is for the government of the people.

This Passage of the Santiparva leads to the inevitable conclusion that Hindu law did not blend morality, religion and law, but on the other hand was fully alive to the difference between the same.

Medhatithi is the most famous of the earliest commentators of Manu. In his beautiful Tika too, he has taken pains to explain the difference between Vedic injunctions and secular law. He says that the Vedas are authority for the unseen spiritual things ; but reason is the authority for secular duties. The king's duties are all based on reason

Dharma is the generic word to denote all sorts of duties, spiritual, moral, social and legal, while Vyavahara is the word for civil law which sets forth legal rights and enjoins legal duties We find mention of this word Vyavahara in its technical sense in Gautama, the earliest of the Smritikars. Kautilya's masterly analysis of the sources of law is the monumental example of this political genius. He says that sacred law, civil law, custom and the edicts of the kings are the four legs of law. Of these, the later is superior to the former. Dharma is based on truth, Vyavahara on witness, custom on the tradition of the people and the king's orders are known as legislation. Whenever there is any conflict between custom and Dharma, or between Vyavahar and Dharma, the matter shall be decided according to Dharma But when Dharma conflicts with reason, reason is powerful and the text becomes invalid.

This classification is to be found in Katyayana and Smritichandrika. These facts are sufficient to establish

beyond doubt that the Hindus had a clear and distinct conception of positive law and did not muddle it up, as many believe, with injunctions and moral precepts enjoined for spiritual bliss and other worldly gains.

The conceptions of Benthum and Austin that law is the mere command of the sovereign authority are deficient, for they fail to recognize many things. International law according to them is no law.

To have a fuller idea of law, larger conceptions than those of the lawyers are essential, conceptions that have their roots in the history and spirit of the nation ; conceptions that have their ultimate sanction in the general will of society ; conceptions that come to us from the moral and spiritual nature of man.

The Hindu Jurists knew that the law owes its authority to the sovereign will of the state, but they believed with their idealism, that the sovereign will is the expression and embodiment of the higher will. Manu says that if there be no king, the world would become full of evils. Anarchy is the source of all misery and suffering The King is the embodiment of divine powers and is commissioned to protect the worlds.

But this conception of concrete reality soon gives way to abstract philosophy. He says that the lord created authority or government for the help of the king and he. continues in VI.I-17-I8 that government is the real king,—the real man, and the real ruler and leader, and that government is the representative of the four stages of life. Government punishes all the subjects. and protects them Government wakes when all sleep and government is rightly called "*Danda*" by the learned.

I am sure that a close study of these lines would satisfy the disciples of Austin ; for Manu is as emphatic as Austin about the sanction for compulsion. But whereas, Austin with the characteristic British understanding of reality, limits himself to the healthy human common sense, the fine and profound soul of Manu soars higher with the philosophic inspiration of his race and looks for a divine sanction for the earthly power. It is idle and useless to enquire which is better. We should only note the essential difference in out-look, in order to understand and appreciate both But it is strange that the meta physical conception is not a late arrival in India. The conception of Rita as the eternal and immutable harmony of the universe is Vedic, and is higher and nobler than all human laws The sovereign and the state must bow down before this divine law. The gods are not above Rita. They move and have their being in Rita

A conception which finds poetic expression in Wordsworth, the high priest of nature :—

> Stern Lawgiver, yet thou dost wear,
> The Godhead's most benignant grace,
> Nor we know anything so fair
> As the smile upon thy face
> Flowers lay before thee in their beds,
> And fragrance in thy footing treads.
> Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong,
> And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are fresh and strong.

This philosophic conception of law has been the guiding force in shaping and moulding Hindu law The ideal before the lawmaker was to secure the ultimate good of society and it is a hopeful sign of the times, that this spirit after a delay of centuries is inspiring modern world.

Hindu law, as many believe, had never been static. The cultural life of India is a life of progress and development and law has always kept pace with the movement of times. The ideal has ever been the same; the achievement of the highest good of society had to be satisfied by innovations and changes. There is and always has been a conservative element in Indian character, but this is due to its great reverence for its mighty past. But inspite of the same, modifications have come and a new Smriti has been written in each new age, to suit the social needs of the time. The most effective agency has been the application of legal fiction, which had been possible to a very large extent; because of the wealth and peculiarities of the language in which the law texts had been expressed. There had been other agencies at work, but one who compares the Sutras of Gautama with the works of Brihaspati or of Narada cannot but notice the dynmic difference between the two—the progress and development of the latter are due to varied influences and social forces, which we need not discuss now.

The next characteristic, that strikes our attention, is the manifold varieties of the Hindn Law. It had the breadth of vision to recognise rules of life of the different classes and creeds and of the merchants and the traders, of the caravan and the guilds and to acknowledge the customs and traditions of the different tribes and different public bodies. We get in the Vedas referenee to Sabha and Samiti, which were assemblies which acted as law-courts. As we come down, we find the gradual recognition of the laws prevailing in trade-guilds and in the corporate bodies of artisans, those prevailing among the local tribes—among distinct classes and families. The Hindu law had taken upon itself the sacred task of righting the wrongs of the society, not by

mere compulsion, but by a catholic idealism that incorporated the differences and divergences of society into a wider harmony.

But the unique glory of Hindu Law lies in its out-look, which combines practical common sense with the highest ethical idealism. The thinkers, that busied themselves with the problems of sociology and law, were mainly concerned with normal action and practice of humanity. They dealt with problems that come in daily life, with the conflicts of desires and interests that wake up in the community. They interpreated them with the usual thoroughness, characteristic of the Hindu genius and tried to harmonise them with their synoptic mind which was able to see things steadily and in their totality But this analytic study had for its background the grand national culture with which they tried to bring law into an ordered relation.

They were inspired by a noble motive, the motive to frame a system that shall try to raise humanity from the vital and mental to the spiritual plane It is both instructive and elevating to know that they did this, with the shrewdest common sense and superfine worldly knowledge They fashioned a structure that is still the wonder of the world, the true import and significance of which has been least understood. To put into a nutshell, the leading principle was to spiritualize the social, economic and intellectual needs of life. . The effect is far-reaching and the conception is far ahead of its time. Even in this twentieth century, inspite of our vaunted triumphs in science and industry, we lag far behind of this high ideal The growth of international law, the recognition of the general will of society are but steps to realisation of this ideal of perfection

It is remarkable to note a constant unity of idea throughout the fleeting centuries. The ethical consciousness of the

race is evident not only in the Vedic conception of Rita, but it reigns through the whole of the process, down to the codification of the great Bengali Pandit, Jagannath Tarkapanchanan, whose work is best known in its translation as Colebrook's Digest

There is a solemnity of purpose, a clarity of unified system and a nobility of conception, which outbalance the more technical and the more practical laws of modern society.

One, who comes to study this most varied and ample record of the culture of a great race, must do so with respect and reverence. The splendour and excellence of its achievement, the rich and profound spiritual motive that underlies its basic conception would open the eyes of the world.

The world is shrinking day by day. It is left ill and hungry from its feast of materialism and it needs a new orientation in order to have knowledge of the fuller truth and beauty of life The hungry and the diseased would be able to come out of its melancholy depression due to economic maladjustment and its utter bankruptcy of soul, by coming in touch with the great and abiding spiritual reality, that pervades the conception of Hindu Law

A truer understanding of its principle and ideal would be the prelude to a better understanding of its real culture. It would bring back to the suffering humanity, a new freedom and a higher harmony. The greatness of the Hindu Law was in the fact that it set an infinite value on men's souls. We, who now grope in the snares of militarism, should raise ourselves not to bow down to the will of the state or the society but to the will of God.

On a truer analysis, Hindu law was an exposition of the will of God in its application in the state and society. The West should pause and see, if it can take any lesson from this attitude of sacrifice and spirituality.

The Value and Importance of Yoga Discipline

Yoga is a spiritual discipline, which develops the inward perception and thereby releases the highest powers of man There is no magic in these perfectly normal psychological experiences Inner illumination is as natural as life itself. It is just like the blossoming of a flower and comes through increasing communion with the inner Self

It is the priceless gift of the great Indian seer, Patanjali to all seekers of light and culture. The gift of the eternal wisdom and religion of India to the world lies in the teaching that all beings are manifestations of the One. Though we are many individuals, separate from one another, in principle we are one. There is one spirit in all men. Though there are barriers which isolate us, we are truly of one substance and one purpose

The *sadhaka* (spiritual aspirant) must realize in his own life, this kinship of life, and thus make himself truly universal. The Yoga system is the greatest aid to this realization.

The word "Yoga" comes from the Sanskrit root, *yuj*, to link or unite. It is the process, which unites the human soul with the divine Soul. All knowledge essentially rests upon experience or realization But outward perception is not a

real knowing; true knowledge requires identification. In order to do so, man must cross the limitations of his bodily prison. He must know the freedom of limitlessness and see things in their fullness and integrity. Through the intermediary of the senses, we can know only limited fragments. Yoga gives us a training, by which we transcend the limits of our physical envelope, and see and feel things in their wholeness, in their intrinsic truth. This supra sensuous perfection is only possible through identification (samadhi), the method of re-integration.

Patanjali recorded this science of mental culture, this science of re-integration, but we have evidence of Yoga practices even in the Vedas and Upanishads. The Smritis and Puranas also refer to this royal road to spiritual realization.

It is a practical and scientifically worked out method of reaching the Truth No faith or belief is necessary. One is to practise and see whether the desired things happen or not; there is no mystery or danger in it.

The philosophy behind the Yoga system is that the external world is but the gross form of the subtle internal form. Therefore the man who can manipulate the internal forces can get the whole of Nature under his control. The yogi masters the whole universe through inner forces, while the scientist does so through controlling external Nature, but science and Yoga meet together in the ultimate analysis, for mind and matter are apparent distinctions—they are in fact the one reality.

The supreme unity, the absolute Reality, is one Existence. It is conscious and full of bliss. It is accordingly called *Satchidananda*, Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. When, in this ultimate unity, differentiation takes place, dualism results,

and the origin of all existence occurs as the first stage of manifestation. As the manifestations increase in number, there is multiplicity and complexity.

Because of that all-pervading fundamental unity, there is really no difference between one manifestation and another, so that all that there is in the big universe is to be found in the individual self The aim and object of life is that spiritual integration, by which we weld together all the separate elements which form our being and realize oneness.

But why cannot we do it easily? Because the mind is like a whirlpool. It is constantly moving and moving Just as in a limpid lake, the sun is rightly reflected, so when the mind is calm and tranquil, we see the universal Self in all its glory and beauty. It is for this reason that Patanjali defines Yoga as the method by which the constant fluctuations of the mind are stilled.

Just as the sea is ruffled by every wind, that blows upon its surface, the mind of man is moved by every emotion and opinion, and is churned by worries and fears. Realization comes only in poise and tranquillity. Let the mind be still, let the desires be silent, let the body be relaxed, let all the senses and impulses be hushed—then and then alone will we be able to hear the song of Truth.

The supreme unity is manifold and the universe is pervaded through and through by it Therefore there are innumerable ways by which the divine can be realized, and consequently there are countless forms of Yoga. The most important are Karma-yoga or the way of action, Jnana-yoga or the way of knowledge, and Bhaktiyoga or the way of love.

But the technical science of Yoga is known as Raja-yoga, the royal path to spiritual illumination. All the creative

forces of man come from some deep and hidden source within his inner being. Our object in life is not to build up a personality but to uncover the transcendental being which is in each man.

Raja-yoga is an eight-fold path which is divided into two stages, the external and the internal. The external stage is meant to make the body and the mind strong and efficient. We must reach the highest possible peak of health and vitality, before we can begin our real journey. The disciplines of meditation and realization require a new function of the consciousness, we are to attain the highest not by intellectual processes but by knowing. This indefinable state of consciousness is styled by some as intuition, by others as mystical experience. But this supra-mental condition of awareness requires the solid foundation of a moral life before man can expect to rise to a participation in the Reality.

The first two items, *yama* and *niyama*, are therefore abstinences and observances, which eradicate bodily and mental diseases, and bring about perfect physical and mental aptitude for the realization of the sublime truths of life.

The abstinences are non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, chastity and non-possession. The first, *ahimsa*, enjoins us not to have malice towards any living creature, in any way and at anytime The second is abstinence from falsehood, so that our speech and mind correspond to what is real and actual. Our speech should be used for the service of all. The third requires the initiate not to take away or appropriate the possessions of another in any way, by thought, word or deed. The fourth, chastity or *brahmacharya*, is really a life dedicated to the Lord and to the Lord alone. One who is to live absorbed in Brahman must be completely free from erotic perturbation or emotion in mind, senses and body.

In the extended sense it, also includes regulation of diet, amusement, habits, thought, sleep and all other physical needs The last abstinence is non-possession of any object of enjoyment. To possess, being a source of attachment, necessarily leads to violence, for one cannot possess without depriving others.

But abstinences are negative virtues, we must practise positive ones, by the observances of purity, contentment, austerity, self-development and the constant thought of divinity. They counteract those forces of nature, which lead towards attachment, and they develop tendencies, which lead us to detachment and thus to liberation.

Purity is twofold, outward and inward We must have a clean body, eat pure food, observe all rules of right living, and act selflessly, this is outward purity In order to have inward purity, we must practise control over the senses, fearlessness, peace of mind, charity ritual sacrifices, Vedic studies, penance, simplicity, non-violence, truth. endurance, forgiveness, abstinence from 'I' assertion, and absence of such tendencies as possessiveness, attachment, enmity, greed, sensuality, anger, and agitation. By purity of the inner faculties, according to Yoga, the mind becomes happy and concentrated, the senses conquered, and a man becomes ready for witnessing the Self

Yama and *niyama* bring inner harmony and conscious realization of the rightness of life and law The next two items are more practical The bodily postures enable the yogi to place the body in a favourable and comfortable posture, in which he can remain seated for a long time, and in which there are opportunities for the subtle forces of our life to work smoothly and harmoniously

These *asanas* (postures) strengthen the body and stabilize the mind. That posture, in which a man can remain longest without effort, is for him the best. They have great therapeutic value, and when practised with discretion, they help the yogis maintain their bodies at a high level of physical efficiency.

Next comes *pranayama*, which is the connecting link between the physical and mental aspects of Yoga. There are different kinds of breath-control. Sankaracharya, while commenting on the Svetasvatara Upanishad, says that the soul purified by pranayama realizes the Supreme Spirit, and that there is nothing higher than pranayama. The Shiva-samhita says that the Lord of Yoga, through breath-control, gains the eight superhuman powers. He crosses beyond the ocean of sin and virtue and freely wanders in the three worlds.

The next four stages of Patanjali are inward practices. In *pratyahara*, we are to withdraw the senses from their natural outward functioning The mind should be shut against all contacts from outside. We are to retire every moment of our life into the inner cave of our soul by driving away vagrant impulses and insistent thoughts.

The roving restless mind of man can have concentration through the dual processes of *dharana* and *dhyana*. Dharana is holding the mind to a particular spot, dhyana is the resulting even flow of a single thought undisturbed by other thoughts. Through the help of this, one attains *samadhi* or super-consciousness Samadhi is the goal of all Yoga disciplines It is that ecstatic condition in which the connection with the day-to-day world is lost, and the seeker is elevated to the eternal perfection of Reality. He, who has attained samadhi, has an intuitive insight into the truth of things.

This realization is the culmination of the practices leading to illumination as advocated by Patanjali. Just as in the

dawn, light floods everything with joy, so illumination is a dawn within the self. The light of the spirit brings to life the innumerable aspects of realization. Through a joyous series of experiences, the seeker realizes the unity of life and the unity of the living self with the deathless Cause which abides in and through the world.

The modern world is weary with troubles Let us have recourse to the scientific mind-culture, expounded by Patanjali and thus attain peace, harmony and bliss through the perfected discipline of the will, through control of the mental states.

Those of us who do not believe in the value of the super-conscious state attained in samadhi may well read what the great yogi Swami Vivekananda said.—"It is easy to concentrate the mind on external things. The mind naturally goes outwards. But not so in the case of religion, psychology and metaphysics, where the subject and the object are one. The object is internal; the mind itself is the object, and it is necessary to study the mind itself—mind studying mind. The power of the mind should be concentrated and turned back upon itself, and, as the darkest places reveal their secrets before the penetrating rays of the sun, so will this concentrated mind penetrate its innermost secrets Thus will we come to the basis of belief, the real genuine religion"

Therefore the method of Yoga has value for the ordinary citizen, and it has important bearings on society at large. Yoga is not a mere acrobatic feat, all our ethical theories, all our moral injunctions, all that is good and great in human nature, have been moulded upon answers that have come from beyond the circle of normal consciousness

Let us, each one of us, go to the fountain source of our religion, our truth and our light, for the supra-mental state of samadhi is the birthright of every individual, and a man is truly religious, when he experiences Reality, when he realizes the supreme unity, and when he is afloat in the ocean of conscious bliss attained in the mystical experience of Yoga.

Dharma, as the Science and Art of Healing

Modern life is a life of stress Almost everyone all over the globe has lost the vigour and joy of normal life. Everyone feels hopeless and tormented, and lives a hellish life of despair and worry.

Dharma, as we call religion in India, is a message of hope. It wants to bring to the tension and torture of frustration and despondency, that bright ray of light, which heals all wounds and gives strength, with which to cope with life's pressure.

In the complex and difficult modern world, pressures beset us from every side. The vocations we follow are very often not to our tastes, the conditions unwholesome and unwelcome, the compensations inadequate From what we earn, we have to pay a huge tax for arms and armaments—a monstrous waste of human energy and wealth. The shadow of the atom and hydrogen bomb brings a dread, which eats into us every moment.

But besides the above, there are social, political and economic pressures in all conceivable ways and manners. The divorce courts are daily witnesses of the broken homes. Husbands and wives cannot pull on. Fathers and children follow different paths. Relatives, friends and neighbours

make a mess of everything. Newspapers bring to our doors the tensions of foreign lands and peoples The competition, the bustle and din, the hurry and restlessness, the commotion, the multifarious responsibilities and obligations are taking away our strength. In this way we become morbid, diseased and disillusioned.

The result is complete nervous breakdown. We may not be in mental hospitals, but actually we are no longer well poised. In this unbalanced life, dharma can bring relaxation poise and harmony. Everyone of us must restore his physiological and psychological balance by taking recourse to the sweet and loving discipline of dharma

Dharma is an all-inclusive term in India What makes a rose a rose is its dharma and what makes a man a man is his dharma, so dharma embraces everything of our life Each man has a body. He has a mind which thinks out things and, if he ponders a little, he will find that he has also a soul.

Dharma leads to the harmonious development of all the three. It heals everything that hurts the growth and perfection of these three factors in human beings and is thus concerned with the whole of our life.

But strangely enough, though religion is the most important thing in a man's life, here in the West, it is least referred to in his diverse social and personal relations We perhaps go to church one day in the week, but for the next six days various other pursuits absorb our attention. We discuss politics, the high cost of living, the prospects of peace or war, the latest best-seller, the merits of television and what not, but give no thought to our religion.

But dharma includes everything in a man's life. It is the most appealing thing and it is the recognition of a supreme aim in life, to which every thought and deed is conformable and the approximate attainment of which is the greatest satisfaction we can feel.

To put it briefly, the basic response of the soul to the Inner Light is internal adoration and joy, thanksgiving and worship, self-surrender and listening It we can only practise these, our hearts will no longer be the noisy workshops of tumultuous thoughts.

The secret places of the heart then become a holy sanctuary of adoration and we live in complete peace and serenity, being poised in the Supreme Power. The inward springs of our life find a new joy and harmony in the midst of the turmoil and fitfulness of the world.

Touch the deeps of your being with the grace of the soul, perpetually bowed in worship and dedicated fully to the Inner Source. Then, though you may be very busy in the world of daily affairs, still you retain all the calmness and balance of the blessed life.

Religion in its true sense is thus an inward orientation , a man who is on the path of spiritual life, finds gradually a gentle receptiveness to divine breathings and his perplexity is gone for ever. By quiet persitent practice in turning all of his being, day and night, in praver and inward worship and surrender to the voice within, to the Bliss Supreme which he invokes in the deeps of his soul, he steadily progresses towards the highest goal.

It you are truly religious, it does not in the least matter what your present circumstances may be or what obstacles

are on your way, because ultimate victory is yours. You radiate a fragrance around; you become a healing and illumining influence and a blessing to the whole of society.

The state of your soul is always expressed in your outer conditions and, the more you rise spiritually, the more of a new grace do you acquire in your body. You become healthy and happy, and this is reflected in the beauty of your conduct. All disease is rooted in evil thoughts.

Religion is a positive influence which comes into a man's life to enlarge and enrich it, to make it fuller, wider and better, and never to restrict it. Your mental concepts change by slow degrees and you gain immeasurable happiness—for it has been well said in the Upanishads that man is born of joy, man lives in joy and ultimately shall merge into joy.

Religion is the great science of mental culture. What you think in your mind, you produce in your experience. What is without is really within If you want health, first think health and you have health. If you want harmony and happiness, first think about them and the outer things will shape themselves for happiness and harmony by a mysterious force.

As Christians you know that famous teaching of Jesus: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled". The virtuous actually have whatever they desire. Heaven lies all about you. You lack spiritual perception, so you do not realize it. If you can feel it and recognize it, the realm of eternal good with all its vistas will open to you.

We must not resist evil. Hatred lies at the root of all disagreement, all the strife public and private, of all feuds and wars. We must love. Love, all engrossing love, should

be our goal. Love works miracles and it is applicable in all the spheres of life.

Take a concrete example from the modern history of India. Mahatma Gandhi was a living Christ of our day. He won the battle of freedom for India. This father of Indian Nationalism did not fight with gun and sword, but his weapon was one of love and good-will. Love is the realm of infinite power and we must realize that the Supreme Reality expresses itself in Love. Love will smooth our way in daily affairs, in business problems, in family relationships, in political quarrels and international feuds.

This amazing power of love is the real source of all things that exist. You just ask for it and it will flow into your being and transform itself into health, wealth and joy. Whatever inspiration you need, you will have from this fountain-head of strength.

The great bard of the Vedic age proclaims with great faith and the assurance of one who has discovered the secret, that all men are sons of immortality and reside in the celestial abode. Realize the Divinity that is latent in you. The whole outer world, including your body, is ruled by this central power The world awaits to be what you want it to be. Ask for beauty, and nature will adorn herself in glorious colours.

Our thoughts mould our destiny. The whole of life is but the outer expression of inner thought Have a new birth in the waters of love if you really wish to change yourself, if you really want health and peace of mind and spiritual development If you believe yourself to be sinful, you become sinful.

Think yourself to be one with Truth, with Existence, Consciousness and the Supreme Bliss. If you do so, you will

soon forget the egoism, selfishness, pride and prejudice which bring about all the miseries of life.

The safest way, however, for attainment of this beatitude lies in the surrender of our will Let us have faith in God, let us realize that the will of God is always something joyous and vital and much better than anything, we can think of ourselves. Let us be meek and humble and we shall inherit the earth by the grace of God.

Let us proclaim the presence of God in our daily life, let us have the splendid realization of our perfection. Once we have this faith, nothing is out of our reach and we can apprehend perfect bliss and infinite freedom.

The task of religious life is therefore a re-awakening. We must be pure in heart. We must realize that God alone is the only real cause and the only real power in existence—not in a formal theoretical way but whole-heartedly We must be in tune with the Infinite. We must bring our own will in perfect harmony with His will—a change in character, a change in souls, is the real change.

The way to achieve this is simple, but yet it is the most wonderfull instrument of the good life It is prayer and nothing but prayer In serenity let us turn ourselves to God and obtain that sense of the Presence of God which is the secret of healing ourselves and the world. The silent thought of God as Love imperceptibly melts all the troubles of life.

Once you accept your spiritual unity, once you become convinced of your divinity, you must systematically try to destroy in yourself everything which should not be there—all such feelings, as selfishness, pride, vanity, sensuality, self-righteousness, jealousy, self-pity, resentment, remorse, condemnation and so forth.

By this practice will come, sooner or later, a life of unhurried serenity, peace and love. We, who live a weary and breathless life in this modern age should know how to slip over into the Divine centre. Find out the calm and the silence which is the source of sound. The complexity and the outer distractions of civilized interests of the day reflect an inner lack of integration.

Life is to be lived from the Divine centre. If you really want to have integration and confidence, yield to the great centre in you and become simple. As Thomas R. Kelly says in his book, *A Testament of Devotion* .

> We are trying to be serene selves at once, without all our selves being organized by a single mastering life within us Each of us tends to be, not a single self, but a whole committee of selves There is the civic self, the parental self, the financial self, religious self, the society self, the professional self, the literary self And each of our selves is in turn ,a rank individualist not co-operative but shouting out his vote loudly for himself when the voting time comes.

This will not do. I can only repeat what Lord Sir Krishna asked Arjuna, the great hero of the Mahabharata, to do ; we must surrender all outer standards of conduct and walk in the presence, and under the guidance and will of God. We must stand in peace and devotion under the watchful eye of our Beloved

Once we surrender ourselves, there will be at once a transformation, a revaluation of much that we try to do, and we shall know by an inner harmony what to do and what to let alone

The fight really is an inner one. We must have inward conquest over ourselves and we gain everything. Once we become His, we have a life that is freed from anxiety and hurry

It is detached work. In that spiritual detachment which is the keynote of the teachings of the *Gita*, we must perform our duties as the servant of the Lord.

Yes, this is the call of religion—devote yourself wholeheartedly to the will of the Lord. The life in God is the centre of Life, and all else is renewed and integrated by it.

God is at work in the world with His cosmic patience. Why then should there be hurry, bustle and noise? The Good is unfolding itself. As the poet Tagore says in one of his fine poems, we need not fret, because the Boatman is at the helm and it is His business to ferry everything across

Forget the fever and fret, and accept the life from the centre, a life of unhurried peace and love. This path of surrender and devotion is so easy and simple, but at the same time it is so rich and radiant. The call comes every moment of your life and it is for you to say whether you accept this life of love or not.

The Basic Teachings of Hinduism*

FRIENDS of the New World ! The most important thing we have to do is to run our own lives Every one has the duty to develop his talents, his knowledge, his understanding in order to contribute to the work of the world in some way. Our beliefs are the cornerstones of our daily living. They point us the way to a fuller, richer and happier life.

Hindu religion and culture can show us this way for self-unfoldment and as such, every intellectual man in the face of the globe, should turn his attention to a work a-day knowledge of the Hindu faith, for among all the races of the world, the living centre of Hindu life is spiritual and religion is a reality to every Hindu seeker.

The West is surely proud of its lofty achievements in science and technology. But we shall not forget that materialism has only increased the skill of mind and hand. The arts, crafts and sciences of our glorious century does not give us any knowledge of the inner self of man.

The result is obvious. We are sick of body and heart. Material knowledge has not bestowed us happiness and joy. It has not made us honest and truthful, it has not given us security, moral courage and spiritual enlightenment.

*Lecture delivered to the Students of Religion, at the Columbia University, New York, on the 22nd November, 1954.

An ancient prayer of the Hindus was—"Lead us from untruth to the heaven of truth, carry us to the land of illumination from the world of darkness and make us immortal out of death"

This prayer contains the quintessence of Hindu culture. The great initiates of the ancient Hindu faith realised that man is divine in origin and the goal of human life is to release into manifestation the spiritual values in man The quest for truth and freedom is the eternal quest And in this quest, our seers came to realise that the spiritual entity, the ultimate reality behind the phenomena is an essence of *ananda*, bliss or joy. In order to realise this, one must have spiritual sense or intuition. Our material senses are unable to unravel the inner harmony, the great mystery of life. With this spiritual awakening, one of the noblest sages in ancient India proclaimed with joy and vigour: "Listen, O Listen! Ye men of the universe, ye are all sons of immortality, ye abide in a glorious temple which is the tabernacle of the Godhead. I have known that great sun-lit personality, who is beyond all darkness and who is the greatest power. By knowing him and him alone,ye can transcend the ocean of death."

These brave seekers were courageous people. They proclaimed with conviction that man is one unto God and it is because of the veil of ignorance that we cannot feel our Divinity. In the divine play of the Lord, one must so play that he can see that he is the eternally perfect being—that he comes out of bliss, lives in bliss and dies in bliss.

One, who accepts this gospel of unity of man and God, will find no evil in the world His entire outlook on life is changed. There is really no death, nor disease. Every indication of discord, of inadequacy, of fear or frustration is merely

a false impression and is engendered by the belief that man lives in matter and is conditioned by it.

Man is to live in the consciousness of Divine Love, Love which for ever embraces, enfolds and upholds man. This is the injunction given in the oldest of the Upanishads. It says: Envelop everything, whatever there is in this world, with the Divine Essence. Enjoy but through the gateway of renunciation and covet no earthly wealth. One who lives in the joy of God, lives in, bright thoughts, which can only reflect peace, goodwill towards man, health and holiness.

The wayfarers in the path of religion must, therefore, realise the nothingness of the material life and intelligence and the mighty actuality of the all-pervading power of the supreme, whom in India we call by the name *Brahma*. The science of this spiritual realisation is Brahmavidya. To the hungry and to the sick we must proclaim this gospel. We must discard sense testimony and understand that God is Life, the principle of immortal good unfolding throughout eternity. This Brahmavidya is not exclusive property of the Indians Our wisest seers were the most catholic-spirited human beings. They wanted to give this immortal science to everybody on earth, we must make the whole world Aryan and tell all human beings that the real man includes tenderness, joy, peace, perfection, beauty, harmony, goodness, reality substance— in short, all the qualities of spirit. To accept this spiritual fact, is to realise an outpouring of blessings. The constant acknowledgment that the real man reflects God's all-inclusiveness, brings greater and greater peace and love, harmony and joy in human experience.

Before I proceed further, I must tell you that the Hindu way of life is not one of mere asceticism. The negation of life

is not the true Hinduism as many most wrongly believe It is a misrepresentation to declare that the Indian culture, that the Hindu dharma denies all value to life, detaches from all earthly interests and insists on the nothingness of the life of the moment. The fourfold aims of life consists of desire and enjoyment, material advancement, ethical conduct and spiritual liberation. Fullness of life must precede the surpassing of life in the limitless joy of *Moksha* It is with this vigour, it is with this spirit that the Vedic bards pray : "I shall live for hundred autumns, I shall grow for hundred years I shall look and see, I shall love and enjoy, I shall develop and learn all these years. I shall ascend higher and higher—nay not for hundred years but for more than that." This period of long life should be one of insipid activity and ceaseless endeavours after the higher and nobler ideals of life

In the Aitareya Brahmana, we find that clarion-call to movement. The poet points to the radiant sun in the sky and enjoins us to work continuously like the sun ; for he that works attains joy and peace The Hindu religion accordingly is a religion of progress : As Sree Aurobinda said : "It is time that this parrot talk about the unpractical, metaphysical quietistic anti-vital character of Indian civilization should cease and give place to a true and understanding estimate." With the above in mind, I shall tell you that our stress all through the centuries was on the spiritual values The Hindu always thinks that the spiritual life is a nobler thing than the life of external power and enjoyment. Let us not be carried away by wrong notions of Sankara's *Mayavada*. This world is not a reality in contrast with the absolute viewpoint, but it is a reality for all practical purposes. The lofty illusionism of Sankara should not make you think that we, Hindus, have no regard for moral values, ethical conduct and the right effort. The whole history of India would

prove that Indian spiritual culture was never a tired quietism on a conventional asceticism ; but a high effort of the human mind to go beyond the life of desire and vital satisfaction and arrive at the summit of spiritual calm, greatness, strength, illumination, divine realisation, settled peace and bliss. But the damaging accusation that Indian culture depresses the vital force, paralyses the will, gives no inventive nor initiative to human life is false. Our spirituality is true to the kindred points of heaven and home and merges together the perfection of the worldly life, with the perfection of divine joy. But once you accept the proposition that man must divinise himself, the question is natural to ask how are we going to do that. This is the real issue in spiritual life. Hinduism is fully conscious of this fact.

It says that creeds and dogmas have no real values. Religion is true in the degree we have of actual spiritual experience. Realisation is the be-all and end-all of all religious pursuits. Those who have made the journey are unaimous in their verdict, that man attains the same goal and enjoys the same peace and bliss in the supreme, by whatever path a man may go. Because of this view, we are the most catholic in our outlook. India has a medley of religious creeds and sects ; but there was never any bloodshed over it. In very recent times Paramahansa Ramkrishna, the great Guru of Swami Vivekananda illustrates this in his own life. He followed the highest through all the known religious of the world and came to the conclusion that all the paths lead to the same spiritual sources. You know that of all the great religions of the world, Hinduism is a religion which has no founder. We say that religion is eternal and it has been there since the very beginning. Dharma is one with this eternal law—whom the Vedic seers termed *Rita*, the cosmic order. The English word *right* comes from the same root as *Rita*.

Man lives in the world of matter, subject to death and the 'much falsehood' of mortal existence. To rise beyond this death, to become one of the immortals, man must turn from the region of disorder, to the region of eternal *Rita*. This is what is inner illumination. It is what the Rishis mean when they ask us to turn from the falsehood to the truth, to battle with darkness and conquer the superb light The whole past of India is a glorious example of vast and unparalleled search for and experiment with the highest spiritual truths The seekers in this noble mission were broadminded men. They had no prejudice nor any bigotry and welcomed every new approach, every new avenue to the realisation of the supreme beatitude. Of the many ways of spiritual attainments, the four are the recognised paths—they are the path of knowledge, the path of action, the path of love, and the path of Yoga. These paths are not exclusive and separate paths, they blend together, they meet together and develop into a unified whole, the more we travel in the path

All these paths take it for granted that the spirit is the truth of our being Our life should be a growth and evolution in the fullness and joy of the supreme, whom we call *Brahma* in India. We must have the true vision of self. Our actions and our efforts are for a cosmic sense and feeling, a cosmic idea, will, love and delight, into which we can relax the limited, ignorant suffering ego. The *Bhagavat Gita*, the Divine song makes it clear that the disinterested work is the way to health, wealth and peace If we look into the innermost recesses of our individual, social, national and international activities, we shall find at once that the guiding force of all our actions are greed and lust,selfish aggrandisement and personal gains. This is what we call our economic life. But this philosophy of greed is the cause of all the worries and cares, all the battles and wars of the world He that

eats for himself takes no food but devours sin—this was said by a great seer in the *Rigveda.*

We must have a new outlook, a new birth and a new orientation. Let us be moved by the spirit of love and live a life of love. If we do so, we shall have harmony and joy. There will be no discord, no war and no division of nations Let us not exalt the illusion of evil, including war, to the point where we make it real.

This is what is called sacrifice in the Hindu religion. Our life should be dedicated life. We should not live for our own petty selves. We should be conscious of cosmic unity, and we should love. We should live for God and surrender ourselves wholly to the divine will. Here action blends with *bhakti* or love. The spiritual man is under the divine directive to be productive, to expand and increase good by reflecting God's goodness and power.

This is man's primal and eternal function, and to this end, he has been given extraordinary authority, dominion over the whole earth.

It is this spiritual process, which enables us to manifest God's power and carry on His mission here on earth. The more we accomplish the divine purpose, the more we attain knowledge, the more we understand and appreciate that man is the spiritual and perfect likeness of God, his function in this world is to manifest this divinity that lies dormant in him. The more we have true knowledge, the more we are released from the captivity of material sense, the more we attain spiritual freedom, with *Jnana* we are loosed from the bonds of tyranny and time. Where the blindness of ignorance and error prevailed, we get the light and joy of spiritual perception. This drive towards the transcendental, eternal

and infinite and the moulding of man into a conscious soul and power of that supreme Existence and creative joy have been the engrossing motive of Hindu Philosophy, the sustaining force of Hinduism, and the guiding force of Hindu culture. The path of *Yoga* is an auxiliary process. It enjoins and prescribes certain exercises, which are beneficial to the seeker in his upward journey Divine mind supplies man with unlimited intelligence and perfection. God has given energy, infinite capacity, unexhaustive strength We are to take this hidden source of energy We are to unfold the richest possibilities of development, in communion with the divine principle. The more we take to yogic discipline, the more we are ovided with inspiration and spiritual assurance

All these paths are trodden paths. Countless seers and sages have walked along them and testified as to the truth and value of them. We need therefore have no doubts in the matter.

But if one is to combine the paths and show only one straight path, one should point out the path of absolute surrender to the will of God. The *Gita*, that glorious book which contains the quintessence of Hindu spirituality, within the short space of seven hundred slokas, end with the unmistakable call of Srikrishna to Arjuna to give up all other standards of conducts and devote himself heart and soul to the supreme being.

But one should not forget that this path of surrender is not a path strewn with roses. Arjuna was asked to fight ruthlessly in the battle-field of Kurukshetra Even Jesus the Prince of Peace and Love says: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, I came not to send peace but a sword" (*Mathew* 10 : 34). It is for this reason that king Rukman asked for tribulations and sorrows lest he forget his love for God.

Peace is less to be desired than suffering. In peace we become complacent with earthly conditions. Trials and tribulations awaken us to cast the anchor of our hope beyond matter and to seek reality in the spiritual fountainhead of love, joy and harmony. The sword of the spirit must be wielded for the sake of righteousness The glory of God must be established here on earth at the sacrifice of our peaceful life in fighting with the dark forces of evil. Evil has no existence in reality. True salvation takes place right where we are and it operates in our human experiences, lifting us out of mortal frailties into the realization and recognition of the allness of spirit. True *Jnana* and true *Bhakti* and true *Karma* is the recognition that man is already free that the salvatian is here and now in the experience of our oneness with infinite power, love and joy.

Ye bright intellectuals, hark the message of ancient India and rejoice. The power and plentitude of America should inaugurate the herald of a new dawn, if it is united with the spiritual heritage of India.

Realise with receptive hearts and reverent moods that spirituality is the real power in the universe. In the hurry and bustle of your great dynamic life, listen to the still small voice of Mother India, which is spreading over continent and ocean to the globe's remotest bound. Unless you build the edifice of the mighty American democracy, on the solid foundation of spirituality, it would be an evil day for the world.

We proclaim to you the mystery of our esteemed Brahma-vidya Hark, realise that you are all Divine beings. God is gentle and loving, for the consciousness of His own infinitude is the most powerfull armour He has. He has no need to be aggressive or combative. Let us realise the infinite nature of

all being and in proportion to our understanding of the divine nature of all being, we would become gentle and more peaceful. Love is never defensive—it defends its own by being infinite. God does not have to do anything, he only has to be. But that being is infinite activity, perpetual unfoldment.

Mahatma Gandhi is the highest modern example of the excellence of Hindu culture He put forth the forces of soul, the armaments of love for winning the freedom of India and he succeeded. It is a matter of regret that he did not live to put his great Idealism in the field of International politics.

You, young hopefuls of the richest and most powerful nation on the earth, my fervent appeal to you today is that if we want to build the dream world of love and peace, we must apply the soul forces, in our fight with communism and through love and love alone, we must strive for the creation of a new, a better, a richer and a happier world

The Psychological And Ethical Teachings of the Gita

The world is aflame to-day. The battle-din is heard again as it was heard in the days of Kurukshetra and we are in perplexity as Arjuna was before the fighting forces. Fain would we say like Arjuna—'our hearts are weighed down, we know not what our duties are. We beseech thee as earnest pupils. Tell us truly which is right and good.'

The *Gita* reveals matchless personality in Krishna the teacher and as we listen to him through the long discourse, we begin to love him. His place is by the side of the other great teachers, Buddha, Christ, Muhammad and the rest. It is a pity that the world knows him so little

There have been rapid changes in the world-thought, within recent years and the learned now think of the highest truths of life in terms of world-humanity Our wonder would be great, when we would find that among the ancient teachers, Krishna speaks for the universe transcending all barriers of space and time.

Religion determines values—the values prized by a people at a given time. But the seer looks beyond and his teachings often contain truths that would be our solace for all time to come. The psychological and ethical teachings of the *Gita*

seem as fresh and as bright as if these have been delivered yesterday. The seekers would therefore get real benefit by a persual of the *Gita*. This article would serve its purpose, if it excites the curiosity of the earnest devotees and if it leads them to the treasure house of the *Gita*.

The *Gita* builds its ethics upon the conception of the *Atma*. The soul is the real man in us. It is eternal It is full of joy, full of harmony and full of health Death does not touch it, disease does not affect it. It is the Infinite and is full of eternal bliss The preception of this psychological truth is the *summum bonum* of religious life.

The bare and bald statement made above seems to be a truism but really it is not so. As the *Gita* says ;

"Some regardeth it as wondrous,
Others speaketh of it as marvellous ,
And others listen to it as a marvel
But none that heareth, understandeth it indeed."

But if the real man is whole, if the real man is happy, if the real man is perfect, why is there so much sorrow in the world, why is there so much confusion, why so much strife and discord, why such bitter grief and dismay and why so much evil reigns supreme ? This must be the natural query in the heart of the bewildered devotee

The *Gita* answers the same, saying that the real man is the mere spectator of the show. The world-process is the work of *Prakriti*, through the three qualities of Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. The endeavour of religion is to have this spiritual experience and to realise this truth and to transcend the sphere of the Gunas.

Times and again, the *Gita* harps on this ideal of non-attachment and dispassion The cardinal teaching of the great teacher is that one should withdraw his senses from the object of senses just as a tortoise draws in all its limbs.

Our passion distracts us and binds us to the fetters of the world and when we are without passion, we can carry on the world's journey, unaffected by its sorrows and afflictions Whatever we may do then, we do it without being moved or attached. The western beholders fail to appreciate the beauty and significance of a religious life, whose chief end is a personal realisation of the God in us We quote a writer on religion :—"on the contrary, the defects in Brahminism have been serious enough. It has been only too tolerant. It has for this reason failed to be a reforming religion. It has tolerated magic and all manner of degrading superstitions. Far from attempting to reform the cruel social injustice of the caste system, it has found a moral justification for them. The religion has founded no church, it has developed no social activities, it has cared little to serve humanity. Salvation is to be won by inner meditation by oneself. One is taught to conceive himself in an intellectual manner to be identical with one's neighbour and love him as oneself, but little motivation is afforded one to go actively to a neighbour's material assistance in any manner" A Student's Philosophy of Religion—Wright, pp. 78-79.

-- This shows how little is known outside, about Hindu Religion. The life of the dispassionate is not a life of inaction. Nobody on earth can remain without work. Once a man is in tune with the world-soul, his work serves the world-purpose Work, whose motive-force is self-glory can do no good—no real good to the world. It is only when a man sees deeper and feels himself as a conscious factor in forwarding the divine

purpose, that he can devote his heart and soul for ethical duties.

In the twelfth discourse, Sree Krishna gives a pen-picture of the devotee. He is one that beareth no ill-will to any being, one who is friendly and compassionate, one 'who has no attachment, no conceit, one who is the same in pleasure and pain and one who is forgiving. He must have no discontent, must work harmoniously cotrolling his passions, must be resolute in character and mind, aud such a devotee who dedicates himself is the beloved of God. Dear is he tó the Lord from whom the world doth not shrink away and who does not run away from the world and who is freed from the anxieties of joy, anger and fear. Beloved of God is he who has no want, who is pure and expert, dispassionae and untroubled and who has renounced all undertakings God loves him who neither loveth nor hateth nor grieveth nor desireth and who forsakes both good and evil and is full of devotion. To whom foe and friend is alike, who is the same in fame and dishonour, who is alike in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain and who has no attachment, one who equally takes praise aud ignominy, who silently accepteth what cometh, who feels no selfish greed for his home, who is firm in mind and deep in devotion, he is the real devotee dear to God.

The insistence is no doubt on non-attachment but thoughts are forces and thoughts are things. We do what we think, and we become what we think. A man who has won the equilibrium, who feels his unity with the cosmic force becomes a power. He can do nothing but good, he can think nothing but noble thoughts, he can feel nothing but sublime feelings. Such a man wants no motive for doing good. His desires, his impulses, his thoughts spring forth from the inner source that moves the world and is thus one and the same

with the divine forces that run behind unseen. The *Gita* concludes that the truly religious man, having cast aside egoism, violence and vanity, having forsaken greed, anger and desire becomes serene and dispassionate and then approaches the *Brahma*. We become perfect only when we can depend absolutely upon the spiritual powers. When we are moved by spiritual truth and when we are absorbed in spiritual thoughts, the world-force becomes one with us. This is a state of bliss which can be more felt than described.

The Gita surely lays stress on ethical inwardness. It has no idea to build a church and lay down principles for such an organisation. Order in Hinduism is maintained by its four-fold divisions of mankind and its four-fold stages in life. Life in society and social activities, which are so much lauded by the writer quoted above are merely means to the end. These have very little to do with spiritual growth and development. In the eighteenth discourse, Sree Krishna exhorts Arjuna to fight saying that valour in the battle.field is a virtue with the Kshatriya and as such, Arjuna should not fly away from the duties natural to his caste He stresses that man reacheth perfection by each being intent on his own duty.

Caste system has been the eye-sore of the Western scholars and humanists. It conserved many socially recognised values and secured peace and harmony. I know that it has its demerits and specially in degradation, it checks the life-force of the society. But nobody should forget that it has its good side also. It is not the place to discuss the merits and demerits of this institution. I refer to it only to point out that Hinduism evolved this institution in order to fulfil certain very useful needs. What the church did in Europe and America, was done here in India by the tow-fold orders in Hinduism.

It is clear, however, that all the great Indian sages and seers have preached that spiritual life is a personal experience It is the private experience of the individual when the real illumination comes, it becomes in him, in the words of Jesus, 'a well of water springs up into eternal life.' The thirst after righteousness must be a personal one. Congregational and church worship is a help in some cases but by themselves, they have no value whatsoever. The Euro-American scholar, born and bred up in the atmosphere of church discipline and the humanitarian activities sponsored by the church, fails to understand the Eastern outlook in the matter. To gain a fuller appreciation of the moral values, and to realise the same in their own lives through the personality of Jesus Christ, has been spoken of as the ideal of Christianity, but really this ideal does not reach the real world of religous experience.

Our teachers always speak of the mystic communion with God as religion The moral discipline is the way and not the goal. The *Gita* is not a moral code One who wants inspiration for humanitarian work, wants to gain experience of moral values, may seek other books, e g., the Code of Manu, for their guidance.

The *Gita* has no mission to illumine moral insight but it inspires spiritual life. It asks us to live on the heights. Man must go up and live in the perpetual sunshine of spiritual awakening. One should live above the conditions of life in conscious unity with the Supreme One should feel there always that he is living and working with God In the ninth discourse Sree Krishna says, "Whatever thou doest, whatsoever thou taketh, whatsoever thou offerest, whatsoever thou giveth, whatever austerity thou practiseth, O Kounteya, do thou that

as an offering to me ; Thou shalt then be freed from the bonds of work, that yields both good and bad fruits. Becoming dispassionate by the *Yoga* of renunciation, thou shalt come unto Me being liberated.

It is God-life that is praised in the *Gita*. We must live with the Infinite, breathe with the Infinite and dwell constantly on the mountain-tops of spiritual existence

The paths to the realisation are many for the Lord assures us that he would give succour to all by whatsoever path man approacheth him. According to the Shastras, there are three main paths for the attainment of salvation—the path of knowledge, the path of action and the path of devotion. The Gita speaks of these three well-known paths, but the path chalked out by Sree Krishna is the path of *Yoga*. It is a combination of the three paths spoken above. Sree Krishna unfolds this path in the second discourse and develops it through the remaining chapters of the *Gita* In the 48th sloka He says: Perform your duties, oh Dhananjaya, being in *Yoga* and forsaking attachment. Be alike to success and failure, for equilibrium is called *Yoga*.

This is the unique teaching of Sree Krishna. The *Vedas* enjoined rituals and sacrifices Performing these sacred rites, it was believed, men would attain power and glory. Sree Krishna preached that the performance of the Vedic sacrifices did not lead to enlargement and enrichment of the soul. There was the other way, the way of renunciation and ascetism for the attachment of consciousness of the divine presence. Sree Krishna was also against their ascetic denial of life. He advised the middle path He asked Arjuna to live the life of the world but in a clever way—being non-attached as is the water-drop on the lotus-leaf. Every now and then, He speaks of this path of equilibrium and extols it to the best of His

power. The *Gita* must be understood and interpreted in the light of this new truth preached by Krishna When there is poise, there is balance and there is equilibrium, we are one with the God-head It is hard to attain this equilibrium. Sree Krishna speaks of the method and so his sermon, the Gita is narrated as a Upanishad, dealing with Brahma-vidya and is called *Yoga-Sastra*

He established the edifice of his *Yoga-Sastra* on the base of *Nishkama Karma*. Krishna says that action is natural in man and he cannot remain without work for a single moment. Work, where it springs forth from greed and device, binds us in fetters but there is a tactful and clever method, work may be done in such a wav so as not to bind the worker. The secrets of this is to become non-attached and dispassionate. Yoga is the clever way to do this.

But it is very easy to speak of non-attachment but very difficult to follow it. We should therefore anchor our souls into the Infinite, so that there would be no difficulty

The *Gita* concludes with the address ;—"Hark again to My most secret word and most patent too, Thou art my beloved and steadfast in devotion, so will I speak for thy benefit Be in tune with Me, be My devotee, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me I pledge thee My word, My darling, thou shalt come to Me truly. Abandon all other duties and follow Me alone, sorrow not, I will redeem thee from all sins."

The *Gita* thus shows that the life of equilibrium is attainable only by a life of devotion. All thoughts and all feelings should converge towards God. Material elements and material powers have their place and value but this can never take you to your goal. The power of the spiritual is infinitely greater than that of the tangible.

By faith we should transcend the world of conditions and obtain the love and affection of God. How great our demands may be, once we are in harmony with Nature and God, all our shortcomings vanish and we can weild infinite powers as we will. This is no myth, this is no idle platitude. Mystics all over the world have testified to the truth and sanctity of this spiritual awakenning. The Gita would be our vanguard in our journey to this spiritual end. This is the age of Dictators Since the rise of Bolshevic Russia, a wrong ethical viewpoint is gaining ground. This takes away individual freedom of action and wants to thrust upon humanity moral and ethical values which the Dictator believes to be good for the race. The Gita however puts stress on individual endeavour. It enjoins that a man can attain salvation only by his own individual efforts.

When Fascism, Nazism and Communism fill the atmosphere with darkness and cloud the fundamental issues, we need a book that may inspire us with lofty idealism and lead us to self-less work. Such a book is the Gita and I am sure that those who are loosing faith because of the new events of the world would find in the Gita a treasure-house of inspiring ideals and illuminating utterances.

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The Essence of the Gita

LIFE is complex to day. The ease and comfort of the past, the simplicity and innocence of the ancient days are now dreams. We are in the midst of a huge organisation—an economic system which bewilders us in its hugeness and vastness It may puzzle an honest enquirer whether there is any value now in turning to the pages of the ancient lore, in order to find remedies for the many ills we suffer from at the present moment.

The doubt is natural, but there are books which have a perennial interest round about them, which retain their intrinsic value all through the ages The Gita is one of them. It stands pre-eminent among the mighty works of the past, because of its universal appeal The Gita is not a sectarian book—it does not satisfy the needs of any particular era. It deals with the broad problems of life and therefore remains a book for all ages.

The fundamental teaching of the Gita is one of dependence to the soul of the universe The Gita does not question the Ultimate Reality, but it accepts that behind the phenomenal world—there is a power, there is an intelligence, which governs this world. From the highest metaphysical point of view—this is an unknowable impersonal Reality, but the Gita advises us to adhere to the personal aspect of this eternal principle, for weak and frail human creatures as we are, it is not easy and wise for us to fix our mind on the unmanifest

The Gita says :—But those who fix their attention on the Absolute and Impersonal, find greater difficulties, for it is

really hard for those who possess a body, to realise God as a formless being

It therefore advises us to give our love and devotion to the Reality in its manifest aspect of beauty and glory as the Purushottama—the Lord and creator of the universe. If we can devote ourselves heart and soul to the lord, all our ills come to an end. We live in the bliss and benediction of a serene peaceful life. Nothing can excite us—nothing can worry us.

Srikrishna, while concluding this supreme work on Brahma-Vidya or the knowledge of God, says that he would divulge the most hidden truth to him as he was his devoted friend and this is the noble utterance that comes for the solace of the world. "Dedicate thyself to me, worship me, sacrifice all for me and bow down to me and thou shalt surely come to me. Verily do I give thee my solemn word, for thou art my beloved." This is the quintessence of the Upanishadic revelations.

So long we live the earthly life, there is conflict of desires and we move on from sensation to sensation, never knowing peace of mind Our selfish desires bind us to the miseries of life. When we can transform ourselves by the life and love of God—there is at once a great change. All that is unholy, all that is materialistic, goes off—a spiritual light floods the view and we share in the joys of the eternal life.

"Follow me" says Jesus—Follow me—says Krishna but it is not the human entity in them that is called 'me' but it is the soul of all souls, that speak through them. This is also in you—in me and in everyone but the difficulty is that we do not know it. It comes in a sudden flash—a momentary revelation and the true nature of love, life and truth becomes manifest.

But apart from this mystic surrender, the Gita answers the intellectual query of a weary soul. Like Arjuna before the great Kurukshetra fight, we also feel confused as to what our duty is. Our weary soul seeks for a guide—our heart wants a sure line of work, and here comes the Gita with its invaluable teachings about duty.

In this world, nobody can sit idle. By the very nature of our life, we are to act, but work impelled by desire is the source of all the worries of life. A life of serene detachment would give us quiet of mind and peace of soul, but this can come alone by disinterested work. We must look upon pleasure and pain, victory and defeat with an equal eye. We are to act and act in the living present for no right effort is ever lost on earth. Steady work is the result of resolute endeavour and this steadiness comes when we look upon work, as the goal and do not seek the fruits thereof

Let me quote the divine words :— " But thou hast only the right to work, but not to the fruits thereof Let not the fruit be thy motive, nor yet be thou moved by inaction

Do all thy actions with mind concentrated on the divine, giving up attachment, and looking upon success and failure with an equal eye. Spirituality is really equanimity of mind."

This is a lofty message of work—an unfailing guide in the weary journey of life But one may ask how one can do work, without an eye to the fruit. Work has its initiative in selfish desire and self-less work is not actually possible for a human being.

Selfless work can come only when a man looks upon his duties as works for the furtherance of the divine will When we do work from selfish motives, we are burdened with

worries and doubts, but when we work as agents of God—success and failure become meaningless—we find delight in the works we do and thus attain complete peace of mind. This total surrender of self—this complete self-abnegation is called sacrifice and this life of sacrifice is the highest goal that we can achieve here on this world of sorrows.

I cannot but again quote the beautiful words of the divine teacher, for they are trenchant and full of meaning. "He who can see inaction in action and action in inaction is the wisest soul. He is a sannyasi, even though he does work. The wise call him a sage, for whatever he undertakes is free from the motive of desire and his deeds are purified by the fire of wisdom.'

Having no care for the fruits of his work, always content and happy, he does nothing even though he is busy with works, his actions taint him not, as he expects nothing, as he goes on working without greed, with a mind controlled. Happy with what he gets without effort, surpassing the pair of opposites, free from envy, same in success and failure, his actions do not bind him. Free in thought and free from attachment, his actions are done in the spirit of sacrifice, with his mind bent on wisdom ; so his action leaves no trace behind For him, the sacrifice itself is the spirit, the spirit and the sacrifice are one, it is the spirit itself which is sacrificed in its own fire and the man even in action is united with God, since while performing his act, his mind never ceases to be fixed on Him.

Even in our ordinary life, we realise soon that self-denial is necessary, for ordinary enjoyments and for ordinary pleasures Unless we can sacrifice the matter of the moment, we cannot expect enduring happiness. This is also true with higher things of life. The life of complete goodness,

the life of joy and peace cannot come but for sacrifice of our sordid, momentary and impulsive hankerings. Self-denial is the key to this noble ideal. But if anybody asks why we should forego the pleasures of the moment for this greater life, there is no answer to it. A thing is good because it is good, a thing is beautiful because it is beautiful. There is no other answer for it It is a gradual realisation, one who loves art, finds immense delight in it, which is unknown to one who has no taste for it. The life of goodness, the life of sacrifice has a compelling appeal and by gradual and slow processes, we realise the sweetness and sanctity of the god-life.

This rule of duty is as valid to-day as it was thousand years back. Greed and self-interest is the cause of all the human worrries. They seem so keen, because they affect our interests, affect our passions and desires. When we are dispassionate, the effects do no exert any influence whatsoever upon us and we find that all's well with the world.

I had an intimate talk with a few cultured ladies one day after dinner. The conversation soon turned into the problems of life "Are you happy here in the West"—I enquired gently. The answers were candid and sincere—"No, we are thoroughly unhappy."

Why? you may call it the ever-lasting 'why' But I may ask you to consider the famous doctrine of *Swadharma* inculcated by the divine speaker in the Gita.

The present civilisation, with all its vaunted glories, with all its wonderful achievements, brings in its turn a life of hectic sensations, doubt and uncertainty. We are constantly impelled on and on by an unquenchable thirst for something —we know not—an unending hankering. The Gita says— "Do your own duties in whatever post you are. The highest

religion is to do our duties and to stand by our duties at all costs This is the highest worship. This is the noblest that you can do in your own life."

This doctrine of Swadharma is the highest ideal. We need not bother ourselves—we need not worry. Let us go on doing the little things that are nearest to us to the best of our light and faith—and thereby we fulfil the mission of God.

There is no doubt a mystical side in the teachings of the Gita. It emphasises on the inflow of god-life by a mystic revelation of the highest truths. But there is nothing mysterious round about it. When we analyse and see, we find that all great truths that we have are not truths so long they are not revealed to us by our own efforts and by our own selves.

But the ultimate truths of life—it is the tradition with us in India—can never be taught, can never be explained—they come like a flash of lightning—all on a sudden—we know not whence and how, if we can keep ourselves ready for its reception by disciplinary and purificatory exercise.

Life is a preparation, a journey—a struggle for this inner illumination—for the attainment of that truth, knowing which nothing else need be known From this view—life is Tapasya—an active endeavour for the inflow of the divine urge, a constant building of the will and the mind for the advent of the light and life of God.

But this mysticism need not deter the practical seeker from adopting the practical ethical teachings of the Gita. The two practical ideals of the Gita are its emphasis on duty and service. We find law and order in the universe—there

should be also an eternal order for us—human beings. Duty, stern daughter of the voice of God shows us this noble path.

Rich or poor, high or low, let us not murmur but go on performing our daily duties with an obedient will and let our activities be turned to the betterment of humanity. He who lives for self, does not really live—he whose life is for others, is really alive. We must dedicate ourselves, heart and soul, for the service of humanity.

"Yield not to weakness"—this is the clarion call of the divine revealer, not to Arjuna alone but to all and sundry. Weakness is the source of all evils Be strong, be up and doing. Hate nobody, rather love all and do acts of service towards all and these, the Lord says, are methods of true devotion.

It requires no mystic sense to follow them They are practical rules which can be followed by each and every one of us.

Sir Thomas Aquinas has said; Whatever I have done in this world, whether intellectual or worldly things, if they have brought one nearer to my God I consider them as blessed, not if they have failed to bring me nearer to Him I call them cursed

The divine speaker shows us the path for the attainment of this noble ideal. Life in God is the highest life and the more we approach nearer to it, the more we become happier True happiness consists in the bliss that is in expanse, as the sage in one of the Upanishadas says—what is majestic is happiness, littleness has no bliss We must extend our spheres of activities till they are free from sordid desires and little cares, till they are united with the great and the good.

The highest message of the Gita lies in its harmonious blending of the life-forces to this noble ideal of god-realisation. The paths of knowledge, work and devotion—they are, in their true sense one and the same path Whatever path we may follow, we must see that it leads to the life in the infinite. Catholic and broad are the teachings of the Gita —for it accepts, in its fold all who seek. The Lord says that every-one should attain them sooner or later by whatever path they follow.

Science is triumphant to-day—mechanics rules our lives, but still we want something for the heart. The Gita is there to satisfy our intellectual and spiritual cravings. Its demands on you are negligible It does not ask for asceticism. It says—attain peace wherever you are—only be in tune with the infinite. It will bring you harmony, joy and peace. The Gita has no creed—no dogmas, no rituals—it is therefore the best solace to the enlightened modern man.

The sunlight never explains itself—it comes and reveals itself in its truth and beauty and we welcome it The Gita is like the sunlight. It is always there in its majesty and glory—its balmy rays will drive away all our sickness aud ailments, if we only invite them to our homes and hearths What should I care for riches if I get no immortality—said Maitrayi to the great philosopher Yajnavalkya on the eve of his renunciation. This should be the real answer of all who suffer to-day.

Life is not sweet and beautiful to-day, but is lies in us to make it sweeter and happier if we will. Humanity is sick; who is there to come forward and lead? I believe, there are many eager souls who are ready to sacrifice themselves. To them I say—accept the Gita and you find what you want

The message of the Gita

The Gita is a sublime book, sublime in its deapth of philosophic *flight*, *sublime in its height of mystic ascent* But neither in its penetration nor in its elevation, it loses touch with our work-a-day-world. It soars high but not too high so that in its perfect synthesis of the mystic illumination with our woidly duties, it remains the greatest book that India has produced to serve in the truest sense as human nature's daily food

The Gita stands midway between the glory of the Vedic age in which seers saw into the ultimate truths with an inner illumination and the age of Sadhana in which men had to toil through paths of Jnana, Karma and Bhakti for the attainment of the highest truth revealed in the Upanishads It contains the quintessence of all that was noble and true, all that was high and beautiful in the past spiritual quest and out of this noble heritage the great author builds an edifice which stands unrivalled as the treasure-house of all that is to come in future

Here lies the greatness of the Gita. In it you see mirrored in sparkling light the soul of India. It has assimilated all the truths that the Vedic Rishis found out by deep search in to the heart of things and harmonised the varied paths for the attainment of that divine unity where in lies the goal of humanity. Because of this unique position the Gita rema-

ins today the Bible of the most of the living faiths in India. Because of this peculiar characteristic, it has been possible to interpret this book in many and different ways by the followers of different creeds.

But to understand it in its greatness, we are to approach it with that breadth of vision and outlook which is all its own. The Gita is known for its wide catholicity. It blends the symbolic suggestiveness of the Upanishads with the warmth of a practical religion, that is universal in its appeal. It is not cold like the subtle six systems of philosophy, it is not abstruse and vague like the Upanishads, but there runs all through, a sweetness of spiritual emotion, which is catholic enough to embrace all forms of worship. The great teacher speaks with the force and vision of divine power "whatever be the way of worship, in that way I approach the devotee, O Arjuna—all human beings tread the paths that leads to me."

This universal message of the Gita has made it the most beloved religious book in India.

The Gita is part of the great Mahabharata, the greatest epic poem of the world and the philosophy of life preached therein is set up against the background of the great Kurukshetra war, in which Arjuna the greatest Pandava hero falters at the greatest crisis of his life. His heart is torn with anguish and his mind is troubled with doubt and he knows not what to do. At this critical juncture came the noblest utterances of the divine teacher and the philosophy of life inculcated therein calms not only Arjuna but is wide enough to serve as the beacon light to the struggling human souls in all ages and climes.

The Gita is concerned with the problems of life and to its great speaker, life is more than logic. Abstract reasoning and cold philosophising *may delight the scholers in their closets* but the toiling humanity needs a voice that will soothe their daily worries

Life's sorrow and struggle is there and we feel the burden and the mystery of the world. The Gita asks us to galvanise our souls with a force that will change the entire outlook and vision of life. The Vedic fathers were lovers of sacrifice—Krishna amplified and ennobled the idea by telling that all life is to be made a sacrifice. We are to tune our souls with the infinite, so that all our actions and deeds would be touched with radiance of the spirit. The Lord spoke this to Arjuna .

"Whatever thou doest Prince,
Eating or sacrificing, giving gifts
Praying or fasting, let it all be done
For Me as Mine"

The central idea of the Gita is thus a life of God-consciousness. We should open our souls for the inflow of the exhaustive divine life which should inspire us both from within and without. We are prisoned within the four walls of egoism which shut us up in its checks and limitations. Once the door is open, the light and life of the expanse frees us from all restrictions and makes us ready for the incoming urge. The more our life and consciousness is fused with the light of the infinite, we rise in magnitude and depth of spiritual realisation

This life in God is the keynote of the Gita and the noble teacher concludes his noble book with the utterance.

"   Nay but once more
Take my last word, My utmost meaning have,
Precious thou art to Me, right well-beloved,
Listen I tell thee for thy comfort this
Give Me thy heart, adore Me, serve Me, cling
In faith and love and reverence to ME,
So shall thou come to Me
For thou art sweet to Me,"

His is the deapth of spiritual calm, whose life blossoms thus with the odour of divine love. The wealth of life and experience is his, but in the midst of the great dance of life he realises that quite silence in which the soul sees into the inmost things and is blessed with heavenly bliss. But the Gita does not encourage a life of inaction for the devotee who feels this music and harmony of divine love. The Gita combined the mystic consciousness of God-love with the dynamic activity in the world. Life has its blessings, nature has its beauty and the world has its joy. The Gita does not asks us to forego the same for the bliss of transcendent life. The rhythm of love and the joy of fellowship, the vitality of life and the delight of work are to be transformed into cosmic delight by means of detachment. The ideal of *Niskama Karma* is the ethical discipline necessary for the unfolding of the spirit. According to all the philosophers in India our worries are due to ingnorance and attachment. When we work disinterestedly and dispassionately, our work no longer binds us, our work becomes God's work and we fulfil the mission of the divine purpose. Life is activity. We can not but work. We can not attain spiritual rest without work and even when we attain, we shall have to work for the solidarity of the world. Work becomes true work, where it is not limited by our selfishness. Our work is pure, when it becomes in tune with the law of righteousness

and leads us to realise our real unity with God, Man and Nature.

The Gita exhorts us to work for the service of humanity, for such service is true worship

> Who so performeth, diligent, content
> The work alloted him, what e'or it be,
> Lays hold of perfectness. Hear how a man
> Findeth perfection, being so content
> He findeth it through worship, wrought by work
> of Him that is the source of all which lives
> of Him by whom the universe was stretched.

Work is true worship of God it is the true sacrifice. It brings us true wisdom. Our isolated self is merged in the universal self and we feel the embrace of the divine. Our egoism goes when work is done impersonally and we are ennobled by sense of the divine which *lifts* the veil from our eyes and discloses that through our work, God fulfils Himself. Thus results an abiding heartfelt devotion to the Lord.

The Gita is thus a synthesis of the different paths of wisdom, work and devotion for the attainment of the fullest spiritual expression of human life. The transcendent life of delight is not for one who follows one of the paths only in exclusion of the rest Life is a harmony and it requires the delicate balance of will, emotion and knowledge

We are not concerned with the subtle intellectuality of philosophy but with the right regulation of life and the Gita is unique in its teachings for a right life.

Life is varied and there can be no sameness between different individuals The Gita therefore asks each and every one to follow his peculiar bent—his Svadharma and assumes that the finest realisation is possible through each sphere of life.

In the midst of our daily work truth lies hidden for we run after shadows and appearances. Life becomes full of struggle and strife, for we fail to look into the deeper harmony. If we become initiate and do the work alloted to our lot, conflicts melt away by the touch of a divine consciousness. The fullness of life and joy is for him, who works thus imbued with the spirit of divine service Nothing is low—nothing is mean in this world of the Lord. The ray of His love illumines every thing on earth and once this light is seen, the immensity of darkness vanishes.

The sages in India always give stress upon realisation. A man may have very fine intellectual understanding but this may not be and very often is not of help for making truth a thing of life. We should yearn after that fitness of life, which enables us to approach the right path for realisation and intuitive attainment. The highest truth is not one of intellectual achievement but of intuitive approach. The spiritual life is life in truth and comes to us after strict preparation and careful discipline. This spiritual illumination is assured to the selfless worker and the noble teacher gives us his word of promise that it matters not whatever the work may be, only if it is done in the spirit of divine servicr, disinerestdly and impersonally. We are not to renounce the duties that lie near at hand but it is promised that the actualities of life would mould us for the desired goal. The life of serene detachment may appear to many to be too lofty an ideal but if we are to follow we should follow the loftiest ideal. To the seekers in this path, the light of truth reveals itself by stages and his journey culminates in the deep tranquility of spiritual harmony, when his whole being opens for unity with the divine soul.

The Gita is the cream of the Upanishads but it makes the adstract idealism of spiritual realisations into a living

faith, by giving emphasis on Brahma, the ultimate reality in its personal aspect. The impersonal Brahma of the Upanishads appears to the man in the street to be a vague and colourless generalisation. He requires a loving God whom he can love and worship and who would cheer him up in his joys and sorrows. Herein lies the excellence of the Gita.

The theism of the Gita appeals to all. The conception of Absolute Brahma is perhaps a nobler achievement but he week human heart needs a living friend and guide, a God, full of bliss and beauty The central idea of the Gita is to be found in its emphasis on God—a God who satisfies our whole being The personal God of the Gita is made human in Krishna the perfect man and his life and character adds beauty and grandeur to the philosophy of detachment and mystic communion, because the preacher did not speak his gospel from an unapproachable height but with the conviction and force of one, who has practised it in his life Krishna is God and God is Krishna and the Vaishnabas affirm that Krishna is not a mere Avatara but is the divine essence itself. The philosophers of his age were erecting monumental edifices of philosophic grandeur but none of these glorious systems except the Vedanta could satisfy the emotional nature of humanity. Man is not made of reason alone The Gita preached the theory of surrender to a loving God, who can be approached with love and faith and thereby brought a change in the entire outlook on life

The burden of misery and sorrow made the philosophers pessimistic but the light of love enkindled by the fiery teachings of the Gita dispelled all darkness and made life aglow with the radiance of optimistic outlook. The initiate in the Gita knows that behind the shadows lie the divine region

of light and there is nothing to be afraid of, the divine mission will be fulfilled sooner or later. We are only to raise up our souls in fath and reverence to the Lord and we are sure to be blessed, for the Master has said "This is my word of promise—that he who loveth me, shall not perish"

It has been well said by the sages that he who wants to cross the dark ocean of life, should take the Gita as his ferry. The Gita is a book for life and experience, one should approach it with receptive soul and the hidden mysteries would then come from the kindly light of this great book.

The Gita speaks in the language of inspiration but the direct experiences of divinity is promised to all. The divine realisation should come sooner or later—we are to toil on with joy in our daily work for the flowering of the divine grace.

The Gita combined the silence of mystic delight with the joy of creative life. Its philosophy penetrates the depth of being in its suggestive mysticism but the Ananda of this deapth is thoroughly reconcilable with the move and speed of the dynamic life. The followers of the Gita are promised the transcendent beatitude beyond the viel of relative existence but not denying the relative but accepting it in its relative joy and transmuting it with a divine aroma.

The Spiritual Basis of Internationalism

To day we stand on the cross-roads of civilization. If we take the right road, we shall move onward into the promised land. If we take a wrong turn, we shall fall into the abyss

A new age is dawning on the earth, which may bring peace and good will between man and man all over the world. Human history and progress is the exposition of human ideals We are what we are to day because of what men hoped to do in the past and what they achieved Our ideals of to day will mould the future The one ideal that will give new meaning and value to our lives is that of world-federation and internationalism Isolation was natural in the past, because of natural barriers of mountains and seas, deserts and high-lands and, above all, the differences of race, culture and language But thanks to mechanical revolution and science, the world has become smaller The striking development of transport upon land and sea, and through the air, the telegraph, the radio, the cinema and the Press, and other technical improvements have made a tremendous change in human intercourse There is now a fresh phase in human history To-day we cannot think of human activities except in terms of world-relations. World movements concern every one of us, however we may try to remain aloof A great

readjustment of outlook on life is therefore necessary. We must adapt ourselves to the changed circumstances and find out a new philosophy of life for the promotion of social progress and civilization Internationalism is still a dream, a longing yet to be attained.

The greatest War that was ever fought is over and though the leaders of the big Powers proclaim that peace is their goal yet we have no justification for optimism If the vast catastrophe caused by the war does not change our outlook, a far more devastating war may follow, to destroy for ever the grand edifice of civilization built with centuries of toil, unless we plan on the basis of international freedom, equality and co-operation.

Man has enormous power to-day given by science and invention. He may use that power for the good of his race or he may let loose the forces of hate and greed, suspicion and jealousy for the total destruction of humanity and its age-long culture.

The leaders of men are dreamers They see noble visions and want that their vision should be translated into reality. They lead the world with their thoughts and ideals. What was their dream one day is reality to-day. Universal human fellowship is such a dream, but before it can be a reality, the idea of mankind as one family should become a universal feeling.

A new mental renaisance is necessary, a new orientation of out-look is needed, for so long men have thought in terms of nationalism and separatism. Conflict and discord arose because one nation thought that it would exploit others and would attain prosperity and glory by plundering others.

A higher harmony of life is necessary. A spiritual synthesis alone can avoid the conflict, and can ensure peace in the world.

Thinkers have analysed the economic structure under which we live and their conclusion is that Capitalism can give employment only by an intensive preparation for war. In the present world, large scale production does not bring plenty, because those who organise it are moved by profit motive and have no desire to satisfy human needs. The profit motive requires expansive and ever increasing markets and this leads to Imperialistic Wars.

Writers in the past have exalted wars and heroic deeds But they should cease to do so in future War involves huge economic waste. But for wars in the past, the human race would have been richer in material wealth. The accumulated reserves of wealth and knowledge would have brought greater comforts for all The wasteful human activities for the manufacture of armaments would have become, if employed for advancement of mankind, a power for progress and happiness. War is also waste of life and thought It makes men ruthless in action, deceitful in dealings and glorifies the brute that is in us by stifling all our lofty ideals and sentiments.

The need to-day is for a higher idealism of a war-less civilisation, which will progress through an ever-increasing circle of noble adventures and glorious sacrifices. The individual wants to be happy and strives to be happy, but he cannot attain happiness, unless there is a State to regulate human conduct The ideal State should mould social life in such a way as to ensure the best possible social equilibrium, out of the vast welter of competing and conflicting desires and interests. This it can do only by spread of universal

all-round education, by universal suffrage and by equitable distribution of wealth among all citizens by the State. Up to now, the State has been controlled by the favoured few, generally by the privileged possessors of property. This has retarded the growth of a full life for the majority.

Because of this, there is a cry everywhere for equal opportunities and for the development of human potentialities. Complex is life and complex are its problems caused by the currents and cross-currents of human feelings and actions. Individual differences of taste, temper and capacity would remain and life cannot be moulded into a single common pattern. All men are not equal Their capacities and attainments differ. But with this reservation, the ideal State is one which is socialist in outlook, where political and economic organisation is based on the ideal of fellowship, instead of competition, setting free a store of human energy for the persuit of the noble things of life.

The future hope of humanity is therefore in socialism, but we cannot have socialism, so long as sovereign States with their capitalistic out-look of profits, greed and acquisitiveness remain. The sovereign independence of national States, the systematic teaching of racial falsehoods and national prejudices and the appropriation of wealth by the few cannot but lead mankind to never-ending wars and hostilites

We should not emphasise national separatism but international dependence, lay stress on cooperation and not competition. Militant belligerence can only go with the dangerous ideal of national sovereign status There must be a world-wide planning and a world-wide activity for the satisfaction of human needs. No State can live a self-sufficient life. We must therefore have the world-federation, which was the dream of

Tennyson, by making internationalism a living ideal, so that economic antagonisms, racial hatreds, national jealousies and religious quarrels shall cease for ever.

The task is, of course, difficult. A world in which every nation and every race shall develop its own character and tradition fully and freely, within the common life of all humanity is hard to secure, but we can give a tangible shape to noble conception and no sacrifice is too great for it.

Our realisation would be easier and our task pleasanter, if we find a philosophy behind this ideal of internationalism. Peace, power and plenty can come to the earth if we can spiritualise our political and economic ideals. The ideal of universal unity which the sages of the Upanishadas saw in the *Atma*, is the highest revealation of human equality ever envisaged by man. In and through each man is fulfilled the divine purpose and the more we realise this, the greater is our freedom. A man who knows that the other man is his own self, cannot but love him and cannot but unite with him, having a common interest in the good life.

This is the highest metaphysical speculation of man Self is Ananda. The ultimate reality which creates this world, which sustains it in life and which takes it back in death is perfection, bliss and joy

This ideal has been lived by a few in the past; it should the common inheritance of mankind Spiritual life is not passive indolence but is fullness and intrepid activity A man that lives for himself lives outside the cycle of sacrifice. To unfold the true nature of man, one should live a dedicated life using his activities for human good. Thus alone can there be individual salvation and universal liberation.

Inspired with this high motive let us carry on the work of elevation of man. A life of devotion to this ideal with an irresistible determination is what is needed to-day for reconstruction of all our bankrupt institutions.

A spiritual insight alone can enable one to see and feel the integrity of Humanity. We must give up our fondness for false individuality and must part with the forces of individualism that create all the discords in life. Humanity is a federation. Individuals cannot live apart, the forces that surround them make impress upon them. Separation is thus ignorance, universality is the true spirit.

Justice need no longer be an empty ideal. We cannot leave a single individual to remain in slavery and degradation. In this belief and faith of the universal man, we have the assurance of success.

We have lived long enough in pain and hate, in greed and lust, in fear and sorrow

Let us throw open the windows and let the splendours of sunshine fill us with hope and joy. The troubles of the past are a nightmare and shall vanish with a clear conception of our common destiny.

Life is a great harmony and a fine melody. Each man must do his duty in joyful acceptance of the truth, that his service is for God. The actualities of life should be harmonised with new values. The internationalism we seek, thus becomes a spiritual fraternity In a blessed combination of idealism and realism , we go forward, not renouncing our earthly possessions but turning them into the imperishable treasures of heaven. Life must be a never-ceasing flow of spirit. If we live the life of love and harmony, internationalism does not remain a thing to be attained but is in our grasp.

Let us begin with faith in and vision of the future. With a new spirit and determination, let us preach this message of fellowship with humanity

The coming race requires a new world-order. It can be only achieved by our creative work, by our self-less sacrifice and by our unanimous resolve The blind forces of human nature must give way to a cultured life of higher significance. Then and then only will the beatific vision of the Vedic poet be realised :

"Sweet will be the wind that gently blows, sweet the sea that rolls. Honeyed will be all crops Bright will be the day and pleasant the night. Even the dust of the earth will bring joy. Gentle will be the animals and mellifluous the forest trees. The great Heaven will bring delight. The bright sun will spread sweetness all around "

Those who are without faiths must remember the strong words of Sophocles :—

> Wonders are many, but none,
> none is more wondrous than man.

Man, with his unconquerable mind, with his inexhaustible faith, with his invincible creative ability is sure to bring the heaven to the door of humanity Let us feel the urgent march of the mind, unique in every individual but yet super-personal. Our civilization and culture are the results of our ceaseless efforts and they will take us further still Let us therfore accept the sweet music of Internationalism. Let us dedicate ourselves to the purpose of universality and thereby bring the life divine within the portals of our mortal existence

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Kalidas and His Art

The Gupta era in Indian history is an age of revival, an era of renaissance in which men realised for the first time after centuries of troubles, the greatness and goodness of humanity. The culture and art of the age received a new stimulus and expressed itself in new forms of beauty and truth. Like the snowy Himalayas on the north, Kalidas stands supreme in lofty grandeur among the artists that inspired this age with their vitality and imaginative sensibility.

He was the best representative of his age. It was an age, in which men gloried in the beauty of language and became word-intoxicated. This craze for perfect expression and for richness and melody of expression reaches its highest excellence in Kalidas. The beauty and blessing of his work lie in its perfect expression. The subtle spirit and the delicate touch of his art is the wonder of all ages. With an enviable ease, he can infuse the richest colour and charm, the warmest appeal and value to each line and each phrase of his writing.

His splendid mastery of rhythm and his unfailing artistic sense remain the joy and delight of all times. Its appeal remains unimpaired It rather seems to grow each time he is read. His style, that is perfect and harmonious, and that combines the fullest elegance with the fullest expression, remains unique and incomparable in its aesthetic opulence.

But no poet is great for mere artistry His meticulous iction is beautifully wedded to noble conceptions, He tried to express the full, rich and varied life of his age in words of truth and beauty His ait therefore has survived the ravages ot time. The greatness of his genius lies in the fact that his works, written more than sixteen hundred years ago, retain their charm and undefinable beauty for us, inspite of changes in life and outlook. His is the freshness of the dawn that has its spell of joy unimpaired each morning His poetry is a great rivei of life and beauty that flows ceaseless to the ocean of truth

But little, very little is known about him. His life-story is enveloped in myths and legends. He lives in his immortal works which cannot but be his profound personal experiences The spirit that animates the pathos of the love-lorn Yaksha in the Cloud-messenger, the joy of life that pervades Raghuvansa—the insight of AbhijnanaSakuntalam is surely something founded upon experiences of life. But there is nothing to unravel the mysteries of this sensitive soul, there is nothing to go to the source that kindled his cieative imagination.

He was one of the nine jewels of King Vikramaditya—whose identity is a matter of controversy It is very likely that he was the court-poet of Chandragupta II, in whose reign Hinduism asserted itself. Kumarasambhaba seems to be an eulogy in honour of Kumaragupta Raghuvansa depicts the heroic exploits of Chandragupta and* Samudragupta.

There are numerous verses in Kalidas which show conclusively that he was a staunch supporter of the revival of Brahmanic culture.

In the famous episode between the fisherman and the King's brother-in-law, in which the latter arrests the former for theft of the King's ring—the lost love-token, are found the lines which uphold the Hindu theory af Swadharma and reject the Buddhist view of Ahimsa.

"What action is natural in a man should not be forsaken, for even the learned do not show mercy to the poor beasts killed for the sacrifices".

There is surely a covert reference, in the Cloud-messenger, to Dignaga who was a famous logician of the fourth century. This is another proof that he adorned the Gupta court.

But though his life and age are unknown, his works live in the hearts of the people These have been preserved intact and they give us the picture of a consummate artist, who shines in the splendour of his genius He is found to be pre eminently a poet of love and beauty, a singer of the joy of life and a prophet of the culture of his age. Of the poems ascribed to him, the three best are the Cloud-messenger, the birth of Kumara, and the line of Raghu The Cloud-messenger is a short book of one hundred and fifteen stanzas The Yaksha, whose home is at Alaka, which crowns the fair summit of the Kailasa hills, was banished by his King to Ramagiri in the Deccan The pangs of separation were too much for his soft and loving heart and when he saw the monsoon cloud, love awoke in him with a new force and he felt the need of communion. With a fine stroke of genius, the poet makes the cloud, the messenger for the conveyance of his love message to his beloved wife, who was pining away in solitude The cloud was sympathetic and carried the message of the love-lorn hero to his beloved in the far-off Himalayas.

Round this simple plot, where nature and man meet, the poet weaves a romance which stands by itself, in the world of love poetry, for its unique beauty and its rich suggestiveness. The cloud passes over the ancient cities of India and the poet gives us with a few masterly strokes, a kaleidoscopic picture of ancient India.

This is really a masterpiece. The picturesque stanzas that move on with perfect ease and melody are gems of chiselled loveliness. He describes the infinite pain of a human heart that yearns for love, in words of music, whose sweeping grandeur has never been equalled. He does not speak of the tragic aspect of love, but of the homely love that sanctifies and strengthens the soul

Kumarasambhaba comes next in order of merit and time. It is a book in seventeen cantos. The book opens with a pictureqne description of the Himalayas—matchless in beauty and varied in its range of colouring and goes on to describe the birth of Gouri, the daughter of the Mountain-King, and to give graphic pictures of her austerities and her marriage with Siva, the great God and the birth of the War-god Kartikeya for the protection of the gods, oppressed by the demon Tarakasura. The best critics, including the most famous commentator Mallinath, are of opinion that the first eight cantos only are from the pen of Kalidas The remaining cantos are inferior in poetic excellence, faulty in diction, and abounding in errors of style The real Kumarasambhaba is a great work of art in which the precision of thought, the aptness of the terms, the sweetness of the rhythms blend into a perfect harmony.

The underlying significance of the work is that a life of austerity is necessary for the birth of a heroic son. Greatness

is not a sudden arrival—it requires sacricfie and discipline for its advent.

Raghuvhansa is the great epic poem of Kalidas. It is a narrative of the heroic deeds of the solar race of the Oudh. It is surely the fruit of a prolonged study of the great Ramayana. The episodes are loosely connected , but still all through the book, there runs a unity of ideal. The mighty kings of Raghu's race, their adventures and exploits, their intimate personal lives are given to us with the simple elegance that captivates. The book opens with the great king Dilipa and we see again the same philosophy of life depicted, as was inculcated in the Kumarasambhaba. A great son does not come by chance. Dilipa and Sudakshina had to serve the cow, of the sage Vasistha. Dilipa had to offer his life for this cow before he could expect the blessings for the birth of a child. Out of this penance came Raghu, the great conqueror The poet has described, the beautiful sites and scenes of his times, while describing the conquest of Raghu and the return of Rama from Ceylon. With the art of a superb artist, he takes us into the inmost heart of the places he describes. Kalidas was a poet of nature. There is a Wordsworthian mystcism, which moves him to portray nature as the living background of the human drama in Sakuntala He is generally however an acute observer and he happily blends scientific perception with delicate poetic feeling. The landscapes are visualised clearly and acurately but behind the perception is the soul of the sensitive artist to whom the sensuous loveliness of nature is a thing of worship.

While giving a pen-picture of Bengal, he does not forget to note that paddy seedlings are transplanted there. But this stark fact is clothed with a lovely imagery all his own.

The poem goes on to delineate the Swayamvara of Indumati, the pangs of Aja on the sudden death of his beloved wife, the lives of Dasaratha and his famous son Rama and concludes with the failure of the race.

Kalidas gives us a galaxy of characters in this epic. With an unerring insight, he portrays his characters and they live vitalised by his unique creative power He spontaneously endows mythical and historical beings with life and they remain unforgettable

In this monumental work, Kalidas vitalised with his rich imaginative power the great race ideals of India—the ideals of service and sacrifice, the ideals of denunciation and renunciation and shows how ruin follows the life of sensuality and pleasure.

Kalidas is the author of three plays Vikramourvashi, Malavikagnimitra, Abhignana-Sakuntalam Vikramourvashi seems to be the earliest, for in construction and grasp of character, it is inferior to the other two. The drama is interwoven round the love of the heavenly nymph and the king Pururava. Pururava killed a demon and saved the life of the nymph and thus there arose love at first sight. The love is won by valour, so the drama is styled "Urvashi won by chivalry" This drama did not receive much attention of the comtemporary critics. The invictive in the Malavikagnimitra is surely a covert reference to the antipathy of his audience This comedy is essentially a youngman's work, strong in lyrical elements but lacking the grandeur and breadth of the Abhignana-Sakuntalam.

Malavikagnimitra is a historical romance The subject is the story of love between Agnimitra, the king of Vidisha

and a maid in the palace called Malavika. There was union between the loving pair at the end, but this happy marriage came through intrigues which give movement to this drama.

This play is full of sparkling characters. There is life and motion everywhere. There is no effort but the characters are painted with ease and naturalness, so that it seems that each one of them is at once living and true. The supernatural is absent here, but absence adds to the value of this drama. The characters in this play have an unfailing humanity, a plausible animation which makes them so dear to our hearts. In this play, we find that Kalidas has attained a firm grip on the concrete realities of life. There is no psychological analysis; there is no theorizing. The incidents and the characters are dovetailed with the marvellous force and insight of the master. A turn of word, a humourous twist gives colour and significance to the most unimportant characters. Kalidas is at his best in the characterisation in this book and the art with which the characcters are drawn, is remarkable for its colour and variety. Dharini, Kausiki, Malavika, Agnimitra, Ganadasa, Vidusakha —all are unforgettable persons of the dramatic world.

But Abhignana-Sakuntalam is the crowning achievement of his genius It is the mature production of his mature age. The passion and fervour of youth, the lyricism of inexperience do not mar its perfection. It is a consummate work of art, bewitching in beauty of style and thought, moving in its subtle suggestions and intense in its depth and insight.

The love of a king for a maid of the forest-home is cursed, because it does not tend to health and balance. He, therefore, forgets her when she goes to him for participation in the duties of wife in the king's palace.

Sakuntala therefore has to come back in ignominy. She akes penance and the wild love, that exceeds the limits, is curbed down by austerities and she is received back as the mother of Bharata, in whose name India is called Bharatvarsha, the land of Bharata.

Love, that is reckless, cannot be the object of adoration. Motherhood is a great ideal and it must draw its strength from the fountain source of home and dignified love. Free love has an element of danger round about it, it widens the field of voluptuousness. The poet is conscious of dynamic splendour of love on life and character. So he is insistent that it must not be debased by sordid passion. It is a power to inspire, a force to strengthen the sorrowful journey of life. Its highest culmination does not lie in the depths of ndulgence, but in the fruition of a harmony between the loving souls. It must look forward to the tender graciousness of a home life, the warm pulsation of a happy union, which consecrates the mother's ideal.

Kalidas is a supreme artist. His diction is full of a haunting music. None could excel him in clarity, melody and dignity. A Sanskrita sloka says that he is the master of similies His work is full of passages of fine poetic beauty which owe charm to his limpid. figures of speeches. It was a conscious effort of his age but his genius lent spontaneity and naturalness to all his imageries. He was a man of wide culture and scholarship, but his erudition did not chill the fire of his poetic imagination. His lines have delicate shades of meaning and his idea is illustrated by a profusion of images. The words are all happily chosen and they stand as it were at the very centre of his thought. The total effect is a peculiar magnetism that captivates the reader In the luxuriance of style that never runs to excess, in brilli-

ance of thought, in perfection of emotion and beauty, he stands unrivalled in the whole range of Sanskrit poetry.

Kalidas is a poet of nature. His keen eye discerns the beauty and the truth that is hidden in nature. There is, however no mysticism about it, nature lends glory and sweetness to human life but it is never spiritualised into a living entity. Kalidas excels in giving delicate and subtle expression of the sensuous delight of the world of nature. In Sakuntala, no doubt the association between nature and man is one of deep intimacy. But this is there to give stress upon the primal qualities of humanity, where man and nature touch and blend. There is no Wordsworthian pantheism, there is no symbolism—but everything is illumined by the bare sincerity of life. The forest-girl Sakuntala loves the creeper, the fawn and the birds, as if they are companions, but this is quite natural. Kalidas puts man and nature in their proper perspectives and shows how they are intertwined but his ardour never borders into the transcendental.

To the Sanskrit poets, love is the vital inspiration of art. But to most of them, sexual emotion appeals in its crudeness. The call of the sex has evoked the finest songs of Kalidas, but he portrays love in all its manifold varieties. The note of elemental passion strikes us in the Kumara and the Malavikagnimitra. There is a wistful touch of romance and a tender reserve in the love of Yaksha for his distant wife In Sakuntala, love passes through the tumult of passion, and is chastened through suffering and sorrow into a graceful consecration of the spirit. Kalidas combines delicate grace with voluptuous intensity, but the appeal to the sense is overcome by the greater appeal to the heart for there is a sanctifying spirit in this treatment of love.

The music of words lures the Sanskrit poets more than the music of souls. Characterisation is therefore generally poor amongst them. But the men and women of Kalidas are vital and full-blooded persons. His figures are the primal forces on the background of primal nature. Rama, Sita, Sakuntala, Dharini, Parvati, Indumati, the Yaksha are characters that live in the memory. It was not an age of realism, but rather an age af aestheticism. Kalidas did not try to make a thorough study of man and his complexities. It is a defect of his age. But still he paints with the deft hand of a master artist and a few strokes give us pen-pictures of men and women that are complete and convincing. Goethe, the poet-philosopher of Germany was very warm in his appreciation of Sakuntala and this lavish praise from a great poet is proof of the superiority of Kalidas. The writing of Kalidas belongs to the great race utterances of literature and like Shakespeare, he would have the most secure place in the heart of nations. He has not the breadth and variety of Shakespeare but he excels in sheer beauty and poetry. Kalidas invested thoughts of his age with the exuberant loveliness of form and as works of art, his books are unrivalled in the literature of the world for their grace and sweetness, for their irresistible appeal and for their sublime tone.

The Importance of Vaisnava Religion and Literature

Vaisnava Religion, the religion of rich and glowing faith, is not a thing of the past that we can study with the impartial outlook of the antiquarians, for it still counts among its votaries millions of people, who live scattered from the snow-clapped Himalayas in the North, down to Cape Comorin in the South. Though it has outlived its period of full-blown youth, the period of development and growth, with Chaitanyism in Bengal, in which it reached the highest altitudes of religious consciousness and emotional ecstasy , still as a living religion, it is growing and adapting itself to the changed environments of the age and the times.

Life is change and development. It takes its colour from all changes that come upon human society and civilization which mould life and shape it into a changed thing, or in other words, life is an infinite evolution, with its origin in infinity, it has its goal also in infinity. Religion is a thing of life, a thing of the human soul, and like life, it is merely a progressive ideal ever trying to realise its infinite aspirations but never actually doing so. So a proper study of any religion cannot be had, unless we trace it back to its primitive conception and thence try to grasp its gradual growth and slow development. From this point of view, Vaisnava religion is

an attractive subject for study, because its life-history takes us back to the hoary old days of the Vedic Sages. The scholar, who will devote himself to the study of Vaisnabism, will be able to know an important aspect of Indian culture-history, which is unique in its remarkable range and variety. In course of his enquiry, the scholar shall have to go to the eternal records, the Vedas, for the earliest references to Vishnu. He must have to know how in the course of the Brahmans and the Upanishads, the Sun-God Vishnu gradually attained importance and prestige. Then he shall pore deep over the Purana Literature including the two great epics of India and must see how the Bhagabata Religion took a definite shape in the hands of the writers of the Puranas Later on, he must study how the Revival of Hinduism, after the decline and decay of Budhism, had its stronghold in Vaisnabism, with its high moral and spiritual philosophy. Coming to later times,he must deeply read the development of Vaisnabism through Sankara, Ramanuja and Maddhwacharya, Vallabhacharya and others Finally, he must come to emotional Bengal and read the life and works of Lord Gouranga and shall humbly try to grasp the beauty and sweetness of the mystic love and adoration of Sree Chaitanya. He must be in constant companionship with thousands of works, replete with delicate sentiments, soft and amorous ideas, with a deep religious feeling underlving all that have been written. To the uninitiated, this long journey, through intricate paths, may seem to be a thankless task, but one who has drunk deep of the cup of love and life shall not grudge to give his days and nights to it.

Ever since the dawn of creation human soul has been craving for communion with the infinite soul that expresses itself in the grand and wonderful manifestation of the world. Philosophers and Saints have devoted their lives in search of

ways and methods for the attainment of this much-coveted bliss This quest has given rise to different religions and different philosophies. Some say that if we can acquire true knowledge, we can get salvation from the bondage of miseries and sufferings. Others claim that it is work and work alone that will bring in the desired happiness and peace of soul. But the path of knowledge and the path of work are replete with obstacles and hindrances, so the average man and woman of the world cannot be expected to follow these intricate and troublesome paths For them came Vaisnavism, the religion of fatih The advocates of Vaisnavism want faith and nothing else from its followers They say to those who come to them for relief from the endless cycle of woes and miseries that envelop the world—"Worship Him with full faith and you shall have joy and bliss". The attainment of Godhead through love and faith is something novel and attracting and the rich and the poor, the young and the old, came in numbers to embrace Vaisnabism This element of love, sweetness, and pleasure is a special feature of Vaisnavism Vaisnavism parted company with the Adwaitavad of Sankara and introduced the personal God, whom the devotees can love and worship and can have that ectsatic life, where God and the soul melt into each other

The Krishna and Radha cult has been the mainstay of Vaisnavism and has given birth to a rich literature, wonderful in its variety, grand in its conception, and very often sublime in the delicate delineation of the passionate yearnings of the human soul and in the portrayal of the thousand and one phases of love raptures, with a mystic suggestion underlying their infinite variations Songs and lyrics, dealing with the amour of Radha and Krishna is still sung and recited with delight to the intense pleasure of the audience in every nook and corner of India Festivals are held in

honour of Krishna and performances are held, which depict the various episodes of his life. The current saying in Bengal that "there is no song which does not speak of Kanu" is really symbolic of the mighty influence which the cult of Radha and Krishna has exerted upon the whole of Indian Literature

But side by side, with the literature of Krishna, there are invaluable works which are concerned with the life and works of Rama. Though meagre in comparison with Krishna Literature, still in point of beauty and grandeur, and in an abiding influence upon the hearts of the people, the literature of the Rama cult is of great interest and forms an unique part of the Vaisnava literature To mention one in passing, the Ramayana of Tulsidas is one of those very few books, to which, in the words of Sister Nivedita, the epithet of "perpetual Hinduisers" may be given. But it is in the Gangetic Valley of lower Bengal, where Nature is luxuriant in its growth, that we do find the prolific abundance of Vaisnava Literature. Emotional by nature, the Bengali mind is susceptible to the soft feelings of the love romances. So the Bengali race found a joy and delight in the story of Radha and Rrishna, which no other people of India could equal and the imagination and the fancy of the race wove a wonderful fabric of legend and myth out of it Interpreting the love of the Gopis for Krishna as the love of the soul for the heavenly Bridegroom, a living and inspiring religion was esablished which brought a new life in Bengal. Then came a man who flourished in the learned city of Navadwipa, whom still many adore as an incarnation of the Supreme Soul, who, by his life and teachings, showed how one can have divine bliss by surrendering one's soul to the Lord in love and devotion. This was a greal impetus and for two centuries. even after his death, Chaitanya's religion flourished

in great vigour and soothed woe-stricken people. Before Chaitanya, there was an extensive lyric literature on Krishna, and it went on increasing with and after Chaitanya. The followers of Chaitanya, however, were not satisfied with this, they created the biographical literataure, wrote dramas and epics on the life of Chaitanya and compiled books from Sanskrit and thus gave a sure footing to their faith.

The Vaisnava religion was not in favour of the ideals of asceticism Sankara, the great reformer, whose virile personality still dominates our philosophical discussions and discourses, was the founder of the many orders of the Sannyasins and established monasteries all over India. But this medieval conception can not be beneficial to peoples of all class and rank. Chaitanya himself lived the life of a Sannyasin, but his religion never gives any pre-eminence to the doctrine of asceticism His religion is the simple and pure religion of love and devotion. If we can live in the spirit and temper, in the humility and faith of Vaisnavism, we shall soon rise, "Through love, through hope, through faith's transcendent power" into that state of mind from which it will be within our reach to have that religious ecstasy which can give one communion with the unseen power behind the dust and tumult of the present life. Therefore, Vaisnavism, with its simplicity and grace, and catholicity has yet to do great things for the modern world, groping in the dark in the midst of its materialistic environments for inspiration and joy. The man, who has turned pessimist, seeing that in spite of its frantic efforts science has not been able to do away with the sorrows and sufferings of afflicted humanity, may find his solace in Vaisnava religion and philosophy and being thus inspired, should go on preaching the simple message of Vaisnavism to all who suffer and feel that life is a curse. To them he shall go and say, "Come all ye who suffer, here is a panacea for all your woes. Have it and you enjoy life, joy and bliss."

The Essence of Vaisnavism

Barnard Shaw has said in his trenchant way that civilization needs a religion as a matter of life and death The world today is rich in material wealth. Science is triumphant and wins victories as days pass by But inspite of the discoveries and achievements, the life is weary and the soul is hungry. As the prophet of Christianity has said, "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul ?"

We therefore need religion to inspire us with a lofty idealism, a religion that will be spiritual food to our hungry souls. Vaisnavism of Bengal, the religion of emotional ecstasy deserves the attention of all of us who are groping in darkness and mist for spiritual solace.

Vaisnavism is the religion of Bhakti, fervent devotion to the Lord. It has an unbroken history of progross and development for long centuries. We are concerned here with the Vaisnavism of Bengal, in which the cult of devotion reached its zenith by the life and teachings of Chaitanya. Chaitanya raised Vaisnavism from its attitude of service and devotion to the phase of love—a conception that is superfine and requires a superfine intellect for its comprehension. But intellect cannot reach far—the deepest truths of life are never attained by understanding but by intuitive experience.

Vaisnavism is therefore the religion of mystic love which reveals its essence only to the initiate who surrenders himself in a mood of humility for the inflow of the divine grace. To one who does not know the method and form of Vaisnavism, it may appear to be sensuous, but in reality it is the aesthetic enjoyment of spiritual experiences through the symbolism of earthly love. There is nothing earthly, there is nothing sensual in Vaisnava worship. Only by sublimation of our worldly eroticism, and by subjugation of the earthly passion, we can expect to have a glimpse of the occult love whither Vaisnavism leads its followers Vaisnavism does not concern itself with metaphysical problems. It accepts that there is a concrete personal God, whose existence is proved by our innate hankering for one that is the embodiment of the highest perfections But it is a spiritual personality that is to be approached by love and love alone. Vaisnavism therefore is essentially a spiritual exercise.

Philosophy in the West has been the search for truth, the ultimate reality through thought. It is an intellectual attempt to deal with the nature of reality—a thinking consideration of things, but in India it is called darsana or sight. It is the study of truth and reality through immediate spiritual vision The methods of approach have been different.

Indian philosophy did not spurn thought and enquiry but held that the Absolule is beyond the ken of human intellect and we can only have a glimpse of it through revealation. But this does not mean that this approach is fanciful and imaginative. The direct experiences of the ultimate were put to the severe test of critical examination and were only accepted if they could pass the test.

In India, therefore, the devotees do not want to talk and argue but to feel and test the bliss of the supreme Logical thinking cannot take us far. Our souls must be in a receptive mood and in such a mood we gain intuitive revealation of the ultimate in the flight of inspiration.

Vaisnavism gives stress upon Rasanubhaba, the realisation of the principle of bliss and the underlying significance of this mystic faith can be had from a critical and appreciative study of the famous dialogue between Ramananda and Chaitanya.

Soon after renouncing the world, Chaitanya came to Puri. Here Sarbabhouma, the greatest logician of the time was converted to Vaisnavism. He started for the south on the pretext of seeking Biswarupa his elder brother. He took the road of Alalnath along the shore.

On the bank of the Godavari, he met with Ramananda Roy. Ramananda Roy was a great devotee and he was charmed by the magnetic personality of Chaitanya. Both became very intimate and the conversation between the two has been recorded by the Vaisnava biographers with great care, for it contains the essentials of Chaitanya's cult.

It is admitted by all the religious creeds of India that this life is only a means to an higher end. Life is cruel and hard and the tragic sorrows of life point to a life of spiritual bliss; The pomps and victories of life are advancement. No earthly goal can satisfy our soul

The dialogue therefore centred round this spiritual ideal of life. A direct experience of the Absolute that would bring a sense of fulness and expansion was an admitted goal but the methods of attainment were in question. The quest is for the highest synthesis of life attaining which nothing in

this world seems to be better. Theory and logic cannot satisfy—an actual living experience of Absolute Harmony and Truth is necessary.

Ramananda Roy at first streesed the rigid discipline of life enjoined by the sages for the attainment of the goal. Truth is revealed to a spirit that is made pure and transparent by fervent spiritual exercises With this ideal in view, a code of duties was evolved with four stages of life and with four divisions of society. The caste system has been much maligned in the West. It had no doubt in its corruption very baneful effects on Indian life, but it aimed at a solution of the economic problems of society. The rigid code of the rules put production and distribution to a solid foundation of equality and thus the well-being of the community as a whole was nicely secured. But this is a digression.

Chaitanya replied that the life of discipline only paves the way—it does not lead to fruition. Ramananda therefore relies upon the Gita and asserts that a life of surrender to the will of God is the goal of life. Desire is the seed of sin. It binds us to the ceaseless wheel of samsara. The Gita preaches disinterested work done in the spirit of sacrifice, work done in the consciousness of God.

But Chaitanya does not accept even this noble ideal of datachment and this message of consecration but says that it is external.

Ramananda thinks that Chaitanya rejects work, whether performed from desire or sacrifice and leans to the doctrine of total surrender preached at the end of the Gita, where the Lord asks Arjuna to forsake all creeds and rites and take refuge in Him.

Even this does not satisfy Chaitanya and he asks for a better solution. Ramananda is at loss and he thinks that the path of combined knowledge and devotion is the highest thing, for the Gita teaches that a life of true knowledge brings peace and harmony and the realisation of the Absolute through knowledge brings in its turn supreme faith But Chaitanya, whose heart is bent on emotional experience, does not like the path of knowledge. He rejects it as external. Ramananda then gives emphasis on sponteneous devotion. He says that faith, that does not depend on knowledge, is the highest form of devotion and quotes a text of the Bhagavata in support. The text runs ;—

"Lord, unconquerable though thou art, yet they who reject the qust of theological knowledge, realise thee by staying at home in the company of lovely men and listening to thy story and accepting it with all their body, mind and soul."

This self-less devotion is the first step in the journey of a Vaisnava towards realisation of the highest bliss. But the master is still unsatisfied and asks for something superior

Ramananda then goes on to describe that love is the highest devotion—the summum bonum of life. He elucidates it by a poem of his own.

Food and drink have value so long there is hunger and thirst, but no value when there is satiety, so worship in many form is necessary so long as love does not dawn. A heart full of love for Krishna is a prize. Go and seek for it—the price is mere hankering but this does not come in millions of birth.

To the Vaisnava, God is a person—with whom there should be ties of relationship The depth and intensity of the fellowship express itself in five forms and Ramananda explains them in a masterly way.

First, in this move in infinite life, comes the feeling of servitude, the devotion of the servant for the master. But this is the lowest urge for there is a distance—a conscious distance between God and man in this relationship. The second step is the fellowship of friendship. In it, the soul receives the everflowing divine influence,not in subordinate humility but in the joy and vigour of co-ordinate urge. The fellowship of Krishna with the cowherds of Brindavana is the most typical example of this fellowship. The infusion of divine life is richer and deeper here. The third stage is that of love of the mother for her child. Mother Mary and mother Yoshoda are types of this form of devotion. The attraction of the mother is deeper than that of the friend and this urge of life is therefore a better method of devotion. Vallabhacharya, a contemporary of Chaitanya laid stress on the worship of God as the Divine child.

This too did not satisfy Chaitanya. Ramananda then begins to dwell upon the Madhura Rasa—the cosmic bliss of love which is the most essential spirit of Vaisnabism. He says that passion as for a lover is the highest worship, and supports it by a text of the Bhagavata —

"Verily the favour shown by the Lord to the milk-maids of Vrindhabana by clasping in the Rasa dance, was never enjoyed by his own consort Laksmi, nor by heavenly nymps, who are charming like the lotus."

There are various ways to the realisation—there are various methods for the approach, but none is so sweat, none has such compelling appeal. The paths, to the different aspirants, appear to be the best in their own way. But from an impartial view, passionate love is the best of sadhans.

The emotions are five—Santa,Dasya,Sakhya, Batsalya, and Madhura, inorder of their upward development. The Madhura

Bhaba contains the quint-essence of all the emotional ardours —it is the concentration of all the feelings. As Lord has said in the Gita, He *comes to us in exaactly the same way in which* we seek Him.

Great is the necessity of the infinite for the life of man—so man wants to taste it through all the chords of his being. In love, we get the touch and embiace of the supreme love. He comes to us through all the gateways of the soul. But the infinite life too according to the Vaisnaba mystics, has an inner urge for love and it cannot reciprocate the love of man and so remains debtor to him.

The whole-hearted love of the Gopis was so deep, so intense and profound that Krishna was overpowered by it and He could not return it.

But even this ideal of mystic union did not come up to the level of Chaitanya's standard. He replies that it is no doubt the limit of man's ascent, but still there is something beyond.

Ramanand's joy knew no bounds. He feels that he is now in the presence of a superior and says that he could not believe that there was any one on earth who would enquire beyond this. He therefore speaks of the love of Radha, a love that surpasses the love of Krishna. The Radha Twatta is the greatest mystery of Vaisnava Theism. To the other milkmaids Krishna was the supreme object of devotion but Radha was the counterpart of the infinite and He longed for her infinite expression of love The Bhagabata describes how Krishna had to go in search of her, when she left the dance, though there were millions of Gopis to satiate his love.

According to the Vaisnavas, the universe is the play of the Lord. The infinite felt a desire for sport and expansion and

he created the world. For His aesthetic and emotional enjoyment, the Lord needs one who is equal with him in power and capacity. Radha is this delight-giving power If humanity is to have a taste of the infinite love, it must follow the footsteps of Radha.

Like Radha, one should aim at detaching from heart all that is not God. One should have for sole occupation the meditation of the joy and glory of the divine being. By this deep contemplation the transports of divine bliss would come to the adept

With Radha's love the dialogue ends The underlying significance of this profound conversation would reveal itself according to the Vaisnava mystics only to the man of faith. As they say, the foolish crow pecks at the ash-fruit, while the connoisseur cuckoo feeds on the mango-blossoms of love. Arid theology and intellectual feats may be tasteful to the luckless scholar, but a devotee wants to drink the water of God's love.

Spirit in man is in evolution. The evolution takes place by an inner urge for expansion and fulfilment. In the concrete realities of life—in the love and affections of our worldly relations, we get a glimpse of the embrace of the spirit. But our heart knows no satiety—it burns and burns. The human relation and the intercourse with nature do not soothe and satisfy. The soul craves for the abiding joy, for the bliss that lasts and for the harmony that knows no discord He, who is infinite, alone can be its measure. He alone can inspire our confidence and bring sweetness and grace to the soul The consciousness of a perfect and enduring pleasure is the assurance of our faith and a guarantee of our search.

The Vaisnavas say that this infinite life and infinite love reveals through love and love alone God is both power and love. Power sustains but love elevates Power keeps order but love is the source of spiritual gratification in divine beauty and delight If you ask for a proof, trust the voice of your own soul speaking Your faith must be your intuition. The test of life is spiritual development Follow the path of love and see whether your experience broadens, whether your life is enriched, and whether you gain strength to the heart and mind

Vaisnava discipline is essentially what we should call today pragmatic Put it to the test of practical experience and see where it leads Its virile faith would bring permanent joy to the world, bewildering in its misery and suffering

Vaisnavism is not other worldliness. It has nothing of the Sankarite ascetism. In his hungering after eternity, the Vaisnava does not despise the show of life To him, this world is the abode of the Lord, where He delights to play. The splendour of life far outweighs its shadows, so there is no room for wistful melancholy nor vain austerities The world of sense is real and we are to fathom it deeper for realisation of the ananda and Prema of the Lord.

Life is confused, life is dry so long as we live in the base egoism. As soon as we free ourselves from the bondage and move in love towards the Spirit, we live in the realm of spiritual joy and bliss.

Vaisnavism thus offers a philosophy of life that is at once great and inspiring. In the storm and stress of modern life, we badly need the tonic influence of a vital religion. Vaisnavism, with its sweet appeal to the sweetest spring of life, with its message of richer life and ampler progress should claim the attention and sympathy of the world

Vaishnava Mysticism

Mysticism is an approach to Truth through intuition. Intellect cannot take us far; its progress has limits The higher truths of life, the finer meaning and significance of the world, can be had only by immediate awareness. The mystic's revelations have value and no man with broad out-look can ignore them.

Vaishnavism delights in mystic experiences of the soul. It stresses emotional ardour through which the receptive soul can have direct communion with ultimate Truth. It believes that spiritual realisation is a matter not of logical thinking but of intuitive experience received as inspiration. The highest fulfilment of life is enjoyment of the divine delight that comes from the spiritual marriage of the soul with the centre of life

Vaishnavism is essentially theistic. It is at war with the subtle intellectuality of Sankara, who holds that there is not the least difference between man and God, that there is complete and essential identity between the human and the Divine. In his heart, man is at one with God. There is an eternal urge in man to break down the apparent divergence from infinitude. The soul hungers, because it has lost touch with its inherent infinitude. Peace and plentitude can come only when this isolation is broken in mystic illumination.

The direct awareness of reality is to be had, according to the Vedantists, by knowledge, and knowledge alone, of our oneness with the Supreme. The highest wisdom that gives identity is the quest of life ; it does not come through grace but by inner discipline.

To the Vaishnava, the Eternal is a personality, a reverent attitude of worship and of love for whom is the essence of his religion. The Cosmic Being is not a bare identity, but a personal being with whom there can be real fellowship in faith and love. The Nirguna Brahman of Sankara is a blank transcerdence, which cannot attract the selfless feeling of the devotee. God is perfect personality called Krishna, the charmer of the soul. Chaitanya, the founder of Gauriya Vaishnavism, explained to Sanatana in a beautiful dialogue the nature of Krishna. He is the darling of Braja's lord—the one without a second, the one whose only form is consciousness, the source of infinite Bliss. He is the material and the efficient cause of the universe, the source and the support of the world. He is the embodiment of *chit* and *ananda*—life and bliss. This supreme Godhead in its aspect of delight and bliss is the highest reality and the Vaishnavas long for an eternal experience of love with this God of Love.

The individual soul is both different and non-different from the central Soul. The Lord is infinite, while the human soul is finite. There is unity in the sense that the individual is an effect which has no reality apart from God, just as sparks have no reality apart from the fire. There is duality in the sense that the soul possesses attributes different from those of God. The burden of sorrow and suffering overcomes man but God is ever free Man is controlled by the *maya* of God, while God rules through *maya*. Man is the

eternal servant of God and a life of joy and glory is his birthright, but forgetting this noble heritage, man becomes the slave of the world through the power of *maya*. This *maya* is a different conception from that of Sankara. Infinite is the nature of Krishna, infinite are His powers but His chief qualities are three; *chit*, *maya* and *jiva*. The *chit* power has again three aspects;—it becomes *hladini* in the aspect of bliss, *sandhini* in the aspect of existence, and *sambit* in the aspect of consciousness These threefold powers are also called *Swarupasaktis*, because they constitute the very self of God. By the *chit*—power God maintains His nature as intelligence and will, by the power of His *maya* the world is evolved and by *jivasakti* the souls are produced. *Maya* and *prakriti* are the same, the energy of God, through which comes this manifold universe and the fetters that bind souls to the misery and pain of the world.

But the highest power of God is the power of delight. Radha is the embodiment of this delight-giving power. Through *bhakti* (love), we may be in touch with this universal joy. This ascent through love is a mystic process. The greatest attraction of Vaishnavism lies in its promise of spiritual love to all its followers. Its essence lies in the luminous experiences of the divine love. The initiate tastes it more and more as his realisation becomes deeper and there is no satiety, for the source is eternal and has infinite shades and phases.

Vaishnavism adopts the language of high imagery to express the longing of the soul for God Vaishnavism stresses *bhakti*. It is the supreme sublime attachment to the Lord due to imense love, a love that seeks no other reward as its goal. This exclusive love and devotion is its own fruition. It must be spontaneous and free, not dictated by fear, nor by expecta-

tion of rewards. It must proceed from the hidden nature of the soul which feels deeply the genial attraction of the infinite Life. It must be so intense as to absorb the entire soul, which must resist all other attractions and tendencies.

But even this deep attachment is regarded as a very low step in the path of realisation of the deep ecstasies of spiritual love. The aim of Vaishnavism is to bind the soul to its lost source, the God of love and of joy A devotion that has its origin in the injunctions of the Sastras is lower than the passionate attachment which flows spontaneously and which is called *Raganuga Bhakti.*

A life of law is necessary when a man devotes himself to religion by a rigid spiritual discipline, but the life of love requires nothing but loving service and worship of God. The life of love is a life of personal relationship between man and God Such a devotee does not meditate on the glory and power of God but on His charm and grace

Vaishnavism does not advocate asceticism. It askes us to find the blessed joy of our hearts' desire by sublimation of our natural feelings and emotions There are four stages in the life of love :—love of a servant for the master, love of a friend for his comrade, love of a mother for her child, the burning passion of the lover for his beloved.

God is infinite love and infinite are the ways of approach to Him. We are to look upon Him either as master or friend, as mother or lover, and by constant contemplation and deep meditation we shall transform the natural feelings of our heart into divine feelings.

The last method is deemed the best. God is sublime love and is won by the deep love of a passionate soul.

Words fail to describe this spiritual relationship, so the yearning of the woman for her beloved is taken as its symbol. But we are to bear in mind that things of the spirit are different from things of the world. This mystic experience of the supersensual world is subtle and fine, it is not polluted by being described in terms of sensuous joy and delight. This spiritual love is surrender, body and soul to God in the manner of the Gopis, the milkmaids of Brindaban, whose selfless passionate devotion to Krishna exemplifies the ideal of this love And the greatest of all the Gopis was Radha whose essential nature was love, who lived not for herself but for Krishna.

Chaitanya, it is said, incarnated in order to taste the passions and emotions of Radha. His life exemplifies the mystic union of God and man. His *sadhana* is the embodiment of this relation. It is a spiritual tie of sweetness, inexpressible in human words Chaitanya shows how the bride, the soul, can be united with her divine consort in His all-absorbing embrace The love between bride and bridegroom on earth is but a limited reflection of the divine love, which awakens our souls to all their powers and activities.

Vaishnava mysticism is an appeal for such a God-imbued life. The object of consciousness is the Lord of Bliss and of joy, whom the soul wants to enjoy through love and faith. There is eternal duality and to the Vaishnava mystic this is necessary, for to him the goal is not the attainment of unity but the eternal enjoyment of love.

Vaishnava mysticism has an universal appeal, for love is ingrained in us and flows directly to the object of love. But our attachment to and fondness for material things of beauty or finite beings cannot satisfy our cravings. The Vaishnava mystic asks us to go to the source of beauty and loveliness, for

the earthly attraction is an indication of the call of our heavenly bridegroom Love allures us, beauty attracts us and sweetness charms us, for Krishna, the divine tempter, wants to draw us to Himself, with His enchanting flute.

The Paths of work and of knowledge are difficult to tread, they demand rigid discipline and require the follower to go against the normal bent of his mind. But Vaishnavism is a gradual journey to the finest expression of life, and as the *sadhaka* is able to free himself from earthly ties and tendencies by the unceasing inflow of the spiritual synthesis, there is progressive unfoldment of harmony

Vaishnavism therefore has for its ideal the complete saturation of our being with the Divine, and the complete spiritualization of human values With this transfiguration, the contraries of life and death, joy and sorrow, vanish and the soul can take part in the transcendent play of God. Life to the Vaishnava is the *Lila* of the Lord—we are outside it because we are hedged round by our shortcomings and limitations

But when life is completely spiritualized, the gate to the place of love and beauty and harmony is thrown wide for us. Illumined by the ray of divine light and inspired by the force of divine life, we take part in the Rasa dance of Krishna which is movement from abiding ananda to ananda at the centre of the divine play of love. For God moves in ananda (bliss).

Vaishnavism has an indefinable charm and attraction for the lovers of mysticism. Its appeal is to the culture of the soul, which provides gradual extinction of egoism and gradual elevation to God-consciousness. This appeal is irresistible It calls also for absolute surrender of self to God and for perfect identification with the divine will through love. There can

never be full realisation, for life is infinite progress and religion a ceaseless growth. But the growth through love is preferable to any other form of development and love alone has power to give us the surest and sweetest experience of Deity. It may be after all an approximation to the goal but still it is the most perfect realisation possible within the limits of human life. And it is not a mere dream. It has been realised by a long line of devotees and their life and sadhana are the strongest assurance to our oscillating faith.

The seers of the Upanishads felt that Ananda or Bliss is the Absolute, for from Ananda these beings are born, by Ananda, when born, they live and into Ananda they enter at their death Vaishnavism invites us to participate in this bliss to have direct and immediate experience of this ananda

If we follow the path shown by a host of teachers and seers, the ultimate peace that transcends all is promised to us. We shall have direct communion with the heart of things and the consequent spiritual splendour will enable us to grasp the unity of the whole that lies beyond the conflict and unrest of life.

This intuitional experience is the crowning glory of human life. When we are lighted up by the fire of love, we are fused with the spirit of God's nature which is bliss. Herein lies the highest consecration of life and the greatest fulfilment of life's struggle.

Chandidas

Chandidas shines like the morning star in the firmament of Bengali literature, heralding the dawn of the glorious Vaishnaba movement of Chaitanya. Before him came Jayadeva, the master-artist in song and melody, but his luminous verses are all in Sanskrit. Vidyapati was a contemporary, but he was a Maithil poet, even though his matchless lyrics have been assimilated by the Bengali Vaishnabas. It is therefore fit and proper to give the laurel to Chandidas as the father of Bengali poetry

Idealism, a thorough-going idealism, has been the key-note of Indian culture and it is therefore that India has ever lacked the historical sense. People in India have always been eager for things that enlighten the soul rather than that enlighten the intellect. The heart of India is therefore anxious more for inner illumination than for objective and intellectual satisfaction.

This distinctive character of India is also manifest in the early history of Bengali life and culture We know practically nothing about this bard, whose songs of surpassing beauty and bewitching melody, have been the cherished treasure of Bengal There is controversy even as to his birth-place—some say he hailed from Birbhum, others says that he was a resident of Bankura. The scholars even differ as to his

personality—and set up theories that there were several poets of the same name.

It would be no good to go into these details, for nothing certain can be made out of it We are concerned more with his work, more with his lyrics whose beauty and charm is sure to make him an international figure There is an affinity of language, thought and melody in the best of his lyrics, by which it is possible to determine the genuine poems of this supreme lyric poet. There were anthologies made by devout Vaishnavas of which the two most famous are the Padamrita Samudra of Radha Mohan Thakur, the preceptor of Maharaja Nanda Kumar, and the Padakalpataru of Vaishnavadas—both of the 18th century. The lyrics that are found there, may be accepted as genuine works of Chandidas.

A few years back, a poetical work styled 'Srikrishna Kirtan' has been published and has been attributed to the pen of Chandidas This book, if it be at all from his pen, is much inferior to the mature Chandidas, we meet with in the lyrics and we shall not take this work into our consideration in the following estimate of his genious.

The little that we can gather about his life and character from references in the poems is that he flourished before Chaitanya, that he was an unmarried devotee of the goddess Vasali, that he loved a washer-woman called Rami, and out of this passion came that effusion of Platonic and passionate love, depicted so admirably in the lyrics, the flights and ardour of which are coloured by a divine mysticism There are many other legends but they have no value, for none of them give us any insight into the inner or outer life of this great artist.

The love of Radha and Krishna has been the favourite theme to the poets and singers from very early times and those who have no acquaintance with the mysticism and symbolism of the Indian religion shall fail to understand and appreciate the hidden beauty and the magic charm that these songs contain.

To the Vedic seers of the past, whose subtle insight and whose spiritual experiences, from the foundation and the permanent structure of India's unique civilisation, had been revealed the truth—that beyond the appearances of the known world stands the immutable one, whose existence and joy sustains the world of variety and that in knowing and realising him through inner experiences and light lies the highest consummation of life. Vaishnava poetry—which is an expression of Vaishnava religion is also in tune with this thoughtforce and it tries to reveal these cosmic experiences of mystic poets, who look upon God not as the embodiment of power and glory but of love and bliss.

These poets had to deal with spiritual and psychical experiences but the intimate touches of the same are beyond all human expression, so the poets had to select images from life and nature, to clothe these supra-sensuous ideas and experiences The artistry of the Vaishnava poets is therefore symbolical and it would be profane to call these poems as sensuous and passionate expressions of sexual love, between the divine personalities of Radha and Krishna.

These poems, inspite of their sex-imageries, moves the hearts of devout Vaishnavas to the highest ecstatic raptures and they see in them the delicate suggestions of the yearning of the human soul for the love of God. We are to bear this in mind while we pause to consider the beauty and grace of these superb lyrics. The poets had the difficult and insurmountable

task of expr essing fcelings of a supra-normal plane of consciousness, with the images of the material world. The outward figures and images stand therefore for inward truths and psychic facts. The bliss of human love is the nearest approach to the inexpressible love of God. The material love feelings are the counter-parts of immaterial divine love, so that the consistent realism of sex-passion, which we notice in these poems, do not hurt the devout but rather fill them with heavenly ecstasy, for they look deeper and feel deeper.

The Vedantic conception of Absolute is not suitable for human nature's daily food. Ordinary mind reels and staggers before such a flight. At the Gita says :—

"Yet hard
The travail for such as lend their minds
To reach th' unmanifest. That viewless path,
Shall scarce be trod by men bearing the flesh."

So the Vaishnabas accept Krishna—the divine incarnation, to be the supreme Lord and try to attain the *sumum bonum* of life by ardent devotion to him. Radha,—the myth goes on—though a married lady, used to love Krishna with her heart and soul, and this deep and passionate love has been symbolised into the craving of man for the Highest Soul.

The poems of Chandidas are generally and conveniently grouped into four divisions—Poems of Purbaraga, that describe the feelings between the lover and the beloved before the dawn of love—Poems of Milan and Abhisara, that depict the ardour in the depth of love—Poems of Biraha—that disclose the pangs of separation and lastly poems of Bhaba Sammilans —that show the intensity of true union in the highest purity of love, when it turns to be the highest devotion. We are to interpret therefore the minute shades and tints of human love

according to the inexpressible psychological states of human consciousness in communion with the supreme,

The Vaishnava psychology is little known to the West but if it be ever known, it will surely stupefy the scholars with its daring analysis and minute details. The Ujjala Nilamani of Rupa Goswami and the Satsandarbha of Jiva Goswami are books worthy to be called world-classics. They are unique in their masterly analysis of human love feelings and carry to us most subtly and variably the manifold significances of the inner self in its manifestation. The psychological treatment of the achings of love and of the throes of separation has an irresitible charm rarely to be found elsewhere.

The poetry of Chandidas is artless, but this artlessenss conveys an impression of intensity The words and images that he uses are simple enough but the deep felt tone lends music and colour to them. So that they remain unique for their delicate nuances of feelings and for their rich suggestiveness.

The contrast between Vidyapati and Chandidas is striking and instructive. Both wrote on common themes but Vidyapati enriches his poetry with classic models and ideals, while Chandidas writes with a spontaneous lyricism that remains incomparable in the whole of Indian poetry—nay if I may say so—of world-poetry. The perfect music of his words and the poignant intensity of feeling give to his lyrics an ethereal quality, which speaks of the joy of immediate illumination The liquid harmony of his songs outrival the scholarly exaltation of Vidyapati and he thus remains the most favourite of the Vaishnava poets.

Before the dawn of love, Radha has only heard the name of Krishna and she is mad with love thereupon. Thus sings the poet ;—

"Sakhi! Who of you utters the name of Shyama before me?

It passes through my ears and haunts my heart and makes my soul a-thirst.

What honey, I know not dwells in the name; My yearning lips cannot leave it.

Benumbed is my soul by repeating his name, Oh darling! how shall I have him?

If the name has such magic, what will not his touch do?
How can a maid resist when she sees him in his abode?

I want to forget but I cannot—Oh what shall I do?
Says Chandidas:—the lady offers her beauty and youth forgetful of her honour".

The beauty and the grace of the original is lost in translation and unless we approach it with a soul sensitive and subtle, the magic and splendour of the poem will remain inaccessible. But yet we find in it, the call of the unknown depicted in an expression that makes us feel something of the intoxication of divine love Finite as are we, limited in our sense and knowledge, it is not feasible for us to have the fullest revealation of the infinite but his names call us from all sides and make us feel His presence.

The Vaishnava conceives that there is no difference between the name and the named and the love of God's name is the beginning of the love of God. The Vaishnavas therefore give so much stress upon Japa and Kirtana—meditation and recitation of the name of the beloved

When love has made her a-thirst, she saw Krishna in all his beauty and glory on the banks of the Jamuna and she was

distraught. The poet describes the love-stricken Radha in the following poem —

"What grieves the heart of Radha ?"

She sits in a lonely nook and pines ever in silence. She gazes upon the clouds rapt in thought—she gazes and gazes and her eye-balls move not.

She has given up food and has worn the robes of a nun.

She unlooses her braid, adorned with flowers, and spread her long dishevelled pair with smiling looks, she looks intent upon the clouds and speaks something with upraised arms

With fixed gaze she eyes the dark-blue necks of a peacock couple.

Says Chandidas :—This is new love with beloved Krishna"

This terse and pregnant lyric beautifully expresses the pangs of first love. When human soul first realises, not by intellectual pursuit, but by inward insight the first flame of divine love, there rises an extra ordinary stir and movement of spiritual sorrows This poem is a symbol of this assionate yearning of this burring desire of the human soul.

The stir of this spiritual love makes Radha forgetful of her environment and she feels the presence of her beloved in her surroundings The poet expresses this by saying that Radha is conscious of Krishna's presence in everything she sees and this deep love lifts her up from the cares of the world to the tranquil calm of spiritual delight

Love deepens and Radha sinks deeper and deeper in the ocean of love But this love has no satiety as the sex love has. By this mystic renunciation, by this naked surrender

of self, there results a spiritual renovation that unlooses the deeper power of the soul, that lie hidden in the mist and darkness of everyday life

The poet sings :—

"In the ocean of emotion, there blooms a lotus, called love.

The love-sick bee hums upon it, for the sake of the honey of love

The bee knows the value of the lotus, so it is fond of it.

The lover knows the bliss of love—others only cry from outside and speak ill, who shall understand this ?

If he that knows keeps silent, how shall I save my life ?

You can't know the inmost secrets of love, by deeds of valour or piety nor by discussion. He alone knows, who has love in his inmost heart.

Chandidas says "Hark bonny lady ! Love is the highest emotion, cursed be the life that does not feed upon the honey of love".

Vaishnavism is the religion of love and in this poem, we get the quintessence of this theory of spiritual love. Love according to the Vaishnava mystic, reveals the treasure of soul, but this love is not what we ordinarily mean by it. The erudite author of Chaitanya Charitamrita says —"Different is love from desire—desire seeks self-satisfaction, love seeks to give the joy of God".

Love is therefore dedication of our souls to the cosmic forces of life. It is life in tune with the infinite. The paths

of knowledge and work are hard to tread, but the path of love and devotion, the path of consecration is within easy and direct reach of all

The Vaishnava conception of love is unique, but there are snares into which the uninitiated may fall. Chaitanya, the apostle of love, therefore, emphasised this point in his teachings. We find in the karcha of Govindadas—' They speak lightly of love but they know not its true import True love grows only when sex distinction is forgotten".

When we get true love, every moment is filled with intuitive experience The feeling of love is all-absorbing—it transmutes all the base in us into the gold of love, our instincts are trans-figured and divinized and life unfolds in variety in the enjoyment of divine bliss.

But it is not easy to live in these cosmic heights. The lover has to descend and suffer in the pangs of separation. The glory that sparkled for a moment is gone and the darkness of void fills the soul with the deepest sorrow. Radha pines in this loneliness

"The love of Kanu is like the Sandal paste

If you rub it, it sends out its odour round, but when you smear the paste in the bossom, the heart-burn grows double, who says friend ! that love is precious like diamond ?

I encased it in gold and placed it on my bosom, but it brought pain and sorrow.

People say that touch-stone is very soft and soothing but wretch that I am, it turns into flame at my touch and gives me so much pain.

All make love but none suffer so much. The witch-neighbours do not scold them.

Mother-in-law and sister-in-law rebuke me day and night, what shall it avail to give vent to them? What shall I do friend! I can brook no more.

Says Chandidas at the command of Vasuli which rests in the village mart of Nannur-"when shall I get bliss?"

We cannot be happy only with occasional possession. But this sorrow has its value. It inspires the soul and causes the subtle forces to work. It creates a movement in the heart which yearns for the constant reception of the infinite spirit The constant fellowship with the divine is the desired end of life and in order to have this, human soul must be purged of all its dross and must be spiritualized by a vigorous discipline

But this discipline according to the Vaishnava is one of love and love alone. This love quickens a deep and passionate yearning for the Lord in which the human soul cries with Radha :—

"I want to forget him but I cannot. He draws me near even though I see him not.

I take to food but cannot eat—I look upon my hair and tears come in profusion. When I wear my dress, I look upon it and his beautiful form floats in my mind's eye. The house becomes repugnant, Oh where shall I go? Oh where shall I have his sweet company.

Chandidas sings "Be quiet lady—She is ever in your heart of heart"

When love grows deep, we have this realisation The beloved was never far away We sought him in vain in the outer world. He does not dwell afar but is always within us. In Him and through Him we do live. The difference, the division that gave resistance so long is a mere shadow—as soon as we realise Him through love, our souls become free and light and we move with the freedom of divine urge, having the constant vision that we are one with the Imanent Spirit.

From such transcendent spiritual height Radha sings as follows :—

"Beloved ! thou art my life I have offered thee my body and soul, my honour, my virtue and my all

Oh Krishna, thou art the Lord of the universe, whom the sages seek.

An humble milk-maid that I am, how can I know his worship ? I give to thy feet the offering of my heart and soul after dipping them in the essence of love.

Thou art my Lord, thou art my Guide – none else please me.

People call me names for: thee, but I grieve not, for it is a pleasure to wear a necklace of dishonour for thy sake.

Thou knowest whether I am true or false—I know neither good nor evil. Says Chandidas—At thy feet virtue and sin become the same"

This is not mere poetic metaphor, neither it is mere allegory It is the perfect expression of the desire of human soul to be fused with the infinite soul in everlasting bonds. The world allures our mind and the gaudy things of the world

make us oblivious of our supreme quest—the music and harmony of perfect union.

In order to have this transcendent bliss, we must live in complete detachment from the charms of the concrete life and in the joy of the consciousness of unity between us and the beloved.

Chandidas is thus not a mere poet but is a great seer. In him, there are elements which make a great poet in the ordinary sense of the term. He was a great musician and his songs and lyrics vibrate with the most ethereal music, so that they remain matchless for their beauty, luxuriance and spelndour.

His art is simple but it paints like nature with a few sure strokes a beauty that remains the wonder of all. The descriptions are vivid and picturesque. In a few lines, he gives us, as it were, a story from the life of the divine couple. The rich treasure of myths and legends that have gathered round this favourite theme enables him to draw with a few touches a whole picture, perfect in shape and suggestive in every line.

As a litterateur therefore, he is a companion of Blake, Shelley and Swinburne but the rythm of his poetry, the music of his songs are not his all, his greatness consists in the wonderful power of giving expression to the highest philosophical experiences in simple words through the images of ordinary love.

There is however no effort and strain. He sings as an inspired poet under the spell of love and his lyrics thus combine the heights of poetry with the loftiest spiritual experiences with a ease and spontaneity rarely to be met else-where

One who reads his poems with care shall not fail to understand the mystic significance and he makes no secret of his mystic conception of love. In a poem, he says :—

"Love sits upon love and upon that sits sweet emotion.

Passion stands upon passion and upon that stands true love.

Bliss is in the heart of true love and grace is above bliss.
Grace abides above grace—who knows this happiness ?

Flower stands upon flower and scent is above that, upon the scent reigns this word love. It is difficult to understand.

Bank stands upon the bank and waves break upon the same ; waves roll upon waves—only the esoteric knows.

Sorrow stands on sorrow—some know something of this. Chandidas says—love stands upon that".

The Vaishnabas are believers in grace The theory of grace is to be found in the Upanishads but Sankara, enamoured with the power of knowledge overlooked it But the weak human heart is in need of grace As the Upanishads say—"The Atman cannot be attained through study or intelligence or much learning—he who wishes to attain, by him it can be attained. To him the Atman reveals its true nature"

The Vaishnaba wants to approach the Supreme with love and devotion and believes that the inmost expression of the divine life can be made manifest only through divine grace.

This path of devotion and grace has a hoary antiquity round about it. In the Vedic worship of Varuna, we find the earliest trace of Vaishnaba faith. Varuna is the great ruler,

the custodian of Rta.—ie the world-order. He is prayed for forgiveness of sin and for favour of grace. This developed into the theory of Upasana, we find in the Upanishadas and it assimilated in its turn the tenets of Bhagavata religion and became the favourite Bhaktimarga.

Bhakti, expresses a living relation between God and man Personality is needed for communion and fellowship and the weak soul of man needs a personal God, full of bliss and beauty for help, guidance and comfort. Krishna became this God of love and he utters his promise in the conclusion of the Gita to his noble disciple.

"Give Me thy heart, obey Me, serve Me! cling
In faith and love and reverence to Me!
So shalt thou come to Me! I promise true,
For thou art sweet to Me".

But the Vaishnaba philosophy of love is of a higher order than this. It is no mere offer of the emotional possibilities of man, but the most sweetest living and loving relation between God and Man. The passion of a loving woman, bereft of its sex-appeal is the truest approach to this inexpressible nature of God-love. The milk-maids of Vrindaban had the highest love for Krishna and Radha is the best of the Gopis. It is said that God incarnated himself in the form of Chaitanya to taste this Supra-sensible love of Radha.

Radha's yearnings—Radha's passionate cries are therefore the heart-throbs of the devotee in search of the most beloved. The eternal play goes on and in this 'Lila' of the Lord, love is the motive-force Love is the essence of the ultimate reality. The Vaishnabas want to realise the expression of the spirit as love.

Chandidas is the apostle and singer of this mystic love. His poems move on in the intuition of the deep attachment to this tradition of love. They describe stages of love—they portray the strains of passion, the worries of separation, the disquietude of the love stricken soul with incomparable ease and beauty. The fervour and glow of lyricism make them exquisite works of art and every line is bathed in a halo of mystery and beauty, that mark them as things of perennial interest.

The fundamental teaching of Chandidas is a message of love. The bride of the soul must be ready for the embrace of the divine lover. A life that is radiant with love finds joy and sweetness everywhere and when the time comes for fulfilment merges into the transcendental divinites. The divine consort is eager for our love and in the midst of the fever and fret of the world—we must keep burning the light of faith for his visit

The songs of Chandidas are in essence folk songs, simple and natural like the songs of birds. They had been preserved to us by singers of the village. They come' direct as it were from the soul of Bengal and have the fragrance and freshness of flowers that blossom by the wayside. They are elemental in their force and vigour and breathe the atmosphere of rural Bengal, the land of plenty and green verdure. The softness and sweetness of the Bengali heart pervades them and they are suffused with the emotional and imaginative bent of the Bengali race.

Bengal is nature's cradle of beauty. Her leafy groves are the nests of singing birds and her valleys on the murmuring river banks are the homes of poets and singers. But none excel Chandidas in sincerity of expression—and in vita-

lity of lyricism, but whether we care for his mystic philosophy or not, the poems would delight all with their music and beauty.

Chandidas is the messenger of love—ineffable and divine love. The present world, with its chaos, needs a poet whose synthetic vision would bring in harmony and peace. The study of Chandidas is sure to bring this balm to the weary soul. It would adjust us to the cosmic force of the world and transfigure our lives with a divine purpose The complete fusion of our being with the divine would bring us infinite bliss and joy.

Chaitanya and His Magnetic Personality.

Chaitanya is the apostle of Gauriya Vaishnavism, the rich and glowing faith of love that still reigns supreme in the heart of Bengal. His was the glorious heritage of spiritual culture, that flowed like a stream from the dim antiquity of Vedic worship and he vitalised in his own life, the essence of this spiritual achievements.

The Indian mind is not satisfied with dogmas and creeds It wants to feel and experience the reality in life. Philosophical controversy has no value for life. We are to know and apprehend the Truth in our own consciousness.

Chaitanya lived a life of high moral purity and all-absorbing God-love. No other saint in India can stand beside him in the depth of spiritual love. His was a God-intoxicated life and his ecstasies are the embodiments of the joy of God-realisation. God was the centre of his life and the soul of his soul. An erudite scholar he was, but he did not care for the honours of learning He had a beloved wife at home, a fond mother and affectionate friends, but the flute of God called him and forsaking the warmest relations of life, and the deepest bonds of worldly love, he embraced the love of God. His emotional soul was so finely attuned that nothing

but taste of this Elysian delight of God-love could satisfy him

The fervour and warmth of his God-passion has been recorded carefully and truthfully by his immediate followers and we get therein the true picture of a soul in mystic communion with the divine soul. To him, this love was a direct revealation and his transparent soul reflected all the fine shades of religious feelings, in their infinite varieties. His utterance about Bhakti is aglow with this mystic responsiveness. He prayed "O Lord, I do not want riches, neither attendants nor beautiful damsels—nor the pleasures of poetry, but give me my love, spontaneous devotion to thee in the cycle of my births".

Chaitanya was born in 1485 at Nadia, situated on the river Bhagirathi, 75 miles north of Calcutta. Nadia was at the time the intellectual centre of Bengal and was the stronghold of Nabya Nyaya or the new logic which made people sceptical and argumentative. The lust of the understanding captivated the soul of the intellectual giants of the time and the efforts of the reasoning and analysis made by them, shunned the sweetest touch of soft faith and the gentle flow of God-love.

The Chaitanya movement was a challenge to these inordinate cravings of the intelligence Chaitanya was a great scholar and it is said that out of compassion for Raghunath, the author of the commentary Didhiti on the Chintamani, the modern text book of Nyaya, he tore into pieces a Nyaya work of subtle study, in order not to deprive Raghunath of his glory. But the deeply spiritual sense of life that was Chaitanya's birthright waged war with this soul-less intellectual stir and he tried to restore the vitality of his age by going back to the ancient intuitive experience of mystic love and faith.

Chaitanya's life is a drama in three acts. He was not blessed with long life but within the short span of forty-years, he was able to create a ferment which moved the soul of Bengal into its depth and we find a sudden flowering, of renaissance that made the life of the people nobler, made the literature richer and sweeter and the society cleaner and purer.

The first part of his life covers twenty-four years. This is called Adi Lila by his greatest biographer, Krishnadas Kabiraj—the erudite scholar whose luminous pen gives us the most vivid and bright picture of Chaitanya and his philosophy. A life of frolicsome childhood—the sports and plays of which appeal to the devotee. passed into a life of study, in which, with a wonderful genius, he mastered the mysteries of Sanskrit learning and became very proficient in grammar, logic and poetry. While a student, he married Lakshmi, the daughter of Ballav Acharya and became a Pundit, teaching pupils in his own 'tol' or school He was renowned for his acute scholarship and he defeated a great scholar in arguments, who had been travelling all over India to win the laurel as the greatest scholar by holding literary battles. After this he went to East Bengal on a scholastic tour but on return from his victory he found his wife dead. He married again Vishnupriya, the gentlest and sweetest girl, whose soft love and passionate devotion, even in her desertion, has been the favourite theme of the Vaishnaba poets.

In the meantime, Chaitanya had been in touch with Iswarapuri, a disciple of the great Madhabendrapuri, who became enamoured with love of Krishna at the sight of the dark-blue clouds. Iswarapuri initiated him into the Vaishnabait faith. He met his Guru again at Gaya when he went

on pilgrimage to pay offerings to his deceased father. The sight of Vishnu's foot-prints effected a dynamic change in his sensitive and emotional nature. A deep and passionate yearning for Srikrishna made him love-mad. His soul was deeply stirred with fervent religious ecstasy and he went on chanting the name of Krishna in varied moods. Sometimes he laughed, sometimes he cried aloud, sometimes he thought himself one with Krishna. These are not ravings of a mad man, but rather effusions of a God-intoxicated soul. He was brought back to Nadia, but he could no longer find any delight in his duty as a teacher. The zeal of scholarship was gone, the craving for victory was gone and the humility of a Bhakta has dawned. While lecturing on grammar and logic, he lectured on Krishna.

At this time, Chaitanya had trances and visions and he got into mystic communion with the adventures of Krishna in the Dwapara Yuga. He tried to believe them and enjoy the delight, inexpressible delight of testing the nectar of Krishna love. To his imaginative vision, appeared the beautiful episodes of Krishna's life and he was moved with ecstasy when they appeared materialised. But this communion was not everlasting The vision faded and filled him with the longings of a bereaved soul

These trances made him known and Adwaita Acharya, who was the prophet of Vaishnavism, like John, the baptist, came to examine him with his scholarly scepticism but was conqured by Chaitanya and became an ardent devotee. Nityananda, who had been a companion of Madhabendrapuri in his travels all over India came to know of this and joined Chaitanya. The Gauriya Vaishnavism owes its power and influence to the untiring energy and saintly work of this great friend of Chaitanya. When Chaitanya took sannyas and left Nadia,

Nityananda came to live with Sachi as his son. Like Paul, he made Vaishnavism, the dominant religion of Bengal by his selfless preachings.

With Adwaita, Nityananda and other followers there came to be a rejuvenation in Navadwip. The love of God became a living passion and people went on chanting and reciting Hari's name and taking religious procession with dances and songs.

Kirtan, as a form of love and devotion is the distinctive feature of Chaitanya's cult The chanting of the lord's name was deemed by Chaitanya, to be as efficacious as any other path for the attainment of the *"summum bonum"* of life. Sacrifice and penance were not for Kali Yuga. The paths of Karma and Jnana were difficult to tread. To the sorrow-stricken world, Chaitanya brought the message of the value of God's name The door of ecstasy and realisation was made available by the easy method of Kirtan.

A great act of this period is the conversion of the brothers called Jagannath and Madhava, who had made themselves notorious by their wicked and sinful acts This miracle is frequently referred to in Vaishnava songs, as an act of great compassion, which is appealed to as an encouragement to all to come and enter the fold of Chaitanya.

But Chaitanya found that few of the great scholars of Navadwip had become his disciples and he felt that the life of ecstacy alone would not convert the sceptic to his religion of love and devotion. He, therefore, resolved to accept sannyasa. Since the days of the great Sankara, the ascetics, who renounced the world and lived the life of hermit were held in great esteem.

He left his home one night and went to Katwa, where he implored Keshava Bharati, an ascetic of the order of Madhavendrapuri. Keshava Bharati knew him and was reluctant to convert him but by his unceasing persuasions, he was influenced to take him to his order.

After the initiation, he was styled Srikrishna Chaitanya, one whose whole consciousness is in Srikrishna, the lord, but this name is usually shortened to Chaitanya and he is known in that short appellation.

His sannyasa roused feelings of great sorrow and lamentations among his kith and kin and this desertion has been sung by the Vaishnava poets, with great poignancy that makes these pathetic lyrics superb and fascinating Sachi was overwhelmed with grief and it is better to pass on in silence over the grief of Vishnupriya, the gentlest soul Chaitanya tried to console his mother by doing some of her wishes but he never more saw the face of his beloved wife, who had to live a life of seperation all her life. With sannyasa, closes the first Act of his beautiful life. He severed the dearest home-ties for the sake of service to God and Humanity and the succeeding periods are dedicated to this purpose

Chaitanya passed the second period of his life in long pilgrimages. He went to Orissa—he went to the south and he went to Vrindaban in the north and wherever he went, in these extensive tours, he preached his simple faith and people flocked round his banner in thousands. In his southern tour, Chaitanya got a famous ally in Rai Ramananda Roy. The beautiful dialogue between him and Chaitanya gives the quintessence of the Vaishnaba philosophy and in his northern tour he won a victory over a great follower of Sankara called Prakashnanda—who became a great devotee under the style of Probodhananda

The method of Chaitanya's conversion was unique His love-longings and his spiritual emotions attracted the people more strongly than speeches. His words were sweet like psalms, his songs were full of passionate appeal and his trances and mystic realisation had an irresistable force. It is said that the true Vaishnaba is one whose sight itself inspires love of God Chaitanya himself saw the perfect embodiment of this ideal. People saw him and knew God and there is no other surer way of conversion.

The last part of his life is of extreme religious ecstasy in the constant adoration of God Orissa was then under the sway of Protapa Rudra, a great Hindu king, who ruled from 1504—1552 A D Sarbabhauma, the great logician was the King's favourite pundit and he became a humble follower of Chaitanya, being moved by an experience of the noble life of God-intoxication which was the characteristic feature of this great phophet Protapa Rudra too became a convert and Orissa thus became a scene of his great activities.

Chaitanya organised a mission in his life-time. Nityananda, who is adored with a devotion warmer than that of Chaitanya, and Adwaita spread his message far and wide in Bengal. The restoration of Vrindaban is the glorious work of the Bengal Vaishnabas. It was the hunt of the six great masters—Rupa, Sanatana, Raghunath Das, Raghunath Bhatta, Gopal Bhatta, Jiva Goswami These are the great apostles of Chaitanya, who, by their great works and saintly lives, built the edifice of his church. His mission worked with success and before his death in 1533 A D. millions of people in Bengal and Orissa adopted his creed.

His last days were days of religious transport and it is likely that he passed off in a mood of religious frenzy. The biographers who are careful to describe minute details are

silent on this point and it will serve no useful purpose to peep behind that veil of mystery.

Chaitanya was a gerat mystic. His teachings are the direct outcome of the divine impress upon his being. His mystic soul was subject to the finest shades of religious feelings in their many varieties but the keynote was that of love and devotion—a deep love that is its own joy and has nothing else for its reward. Chaitanya, by his trances and by his spiritual experiences, showed how the pure and unalloyed love of God may be made the fountain source of life.

The sceptic may scoff at his claims and say that these are mere hallucinations of a frenzied soul. But the many phases of his spiritual realisation were enacted before the shrewdest logicians and the greatest intellectual giants of his age and there is no reason to believe that they were deluded. His ecstasies are, therefore, not surely the ravings of a diseased soul, nor are they tricks of an imposter.

The infatuation, that comes form love of God, is better and sweeter than all other infatuations which make us their bond-slaves all through life. The intensity of the spiritual ingress is a reality and it may be so high and violent, that it may make a man forget-ful of his normal consciousness.

The world of matter is one, the world of spirit is another and one who has no spiritual vision, shall fail to understand and appreciate the movements of the soul, that is infused with the ineffable light of realisation.

Chaitanya's creed is essentially theistic. The austere intellectualism of Sankara did not satisfy him. Chaitanya, with his profound spirituality, staggers before the remorseless logic of Sankara, with which he solved the problem of exist-

ence with his non-dualist theory of absolute oneness, According to Chaitanya, God, soul and nature are three distinct and different principles The highest realisation is a spiritual fellowship with the divine in love and not absolute identification in power, light and life as the Vedantists hold. There should always be a difference between the finite soul and the divine personality, for without this categorical distinction. there can be no love.

Love is the highest ideal and God appeared as man to enjoy the highest bliss of love According to the Vaisnavas, the incarnation of Chaitanya is for enjoyment of the blessedness of love, which Radha, the consort of Krishna felt for him. The complete merging of the Adwaitists, therefore, does not appeal to the Vaishnava devotee, who crave fulfilment of life, through an eternal experience of spiritual love. The path of Bhakti or devotion is very ancient. Chaitanya gave emphasis on the aspect of Prem-Bhakti, which according to the Vaisnavas, is the highest thing on earth. The Vaisnavas, as the Bhagvata says, do not crave unity with the Lord or fellowship in wealth and power but seeks only love and attachment to the Lord.

This emotional attachment is inexpressible, words fail to convey the same. Radha's passion for Krishna is taken to be the symbol for this spiritual love

Krishna, to the Vaisnavas, is the highest God, the perfect Being. His self is composed of three powers Sat, Chit and Ananda, existence, consciousness and delight What delights Krishna is called the power of delight (hladini). Krishna is himself delight and yet he tastes delight. Radha is the essence of the delight-giving power. She is the personification of the supreme emotion of love. What we shall aim at in life is to get a little of this sweetest and loftiest love.

Chaitanya realised the infinite shades and varieties of this divine love and showed to the world how this love, once dawned, brings to us the land and joy of our heart's desire. His cult of love is unalloyed love, and spontaneous out-burst of the soul's yearnings and has no ulterior gain for its object. It is as Rupa says—the loving worship and service of Lord Krishna, uninterrupted by the desire of anything else and unenveloped by knowledge and work.

It is a passion that waits for no reason but flows on and on with an inward urge. It moves on and flows directly into the ocean of love and bliss and the Sadhaka experiences more and more the sweetness and light of infinite rays for which the soul is athirst, in the midst of the dust of the world. The soul is to rise above the turmoils of life, to enjoy the rhythmic dance of bliss and this the soul does by a life of divine love. Chaitanya's message has been described as mere Aestheticism It leads, as they say, into an imbecile amorous feeling of the heart which takes no note of God in his power and wisdom. This is not an honest criticism. The Vaishnavas, it is true, do not crave for power and wisdom, but with the illumination of love, comes power and knowledge While asked by his father, why Prahlada was not killed, he replied that as he wished no evil to anybody but beheld God in everything, none inflicted any suffering upon him, that whatever power he possessed, was the outcome of this love and not the result of any magic. Once the heart is open and realises the unity in love; power and wisdom must come of their own accord. But this religion of love is not a call to sensuous life but it begins rather when one forgets the senses. Life's seeking and progress are not achieved by a ceaseless activity for material prosperity It brings us harmony and joy. It rather culminates in that realisation of love where cosmic affection makes the whole

world our own. The present world is weary with its fever of materialism. The triumphs of science do not console the heart and it needs a philosophy of love that can bring solace and joy. Chaitanya's message of love—the calm and poise of divine love is the need of the day. We have enough of striving, we have enough of fight and we feel that we are poorer for our victories. The hurry and move tire the soul and we want to be absorbed once more into that intensive enjoyment of Beauty and Truth and Love and Delight, with which Chaitanya was intoxicated.

The ineffable delight of spiritual experiences and the radiant feelings of God-love which transform the soul and the whole being and nature of man, are not myths but are concrete realities, illustrated and experimented by Chaitanya in his own life and so beautifully recorded in minute details by his biographers. We, therefore. need not despair This vision of truth and this appreciation of delight is vouchsafed to us. Chaitanya was a living figure of faith and communion. He made God accesible to us through the human relations. He taught us to see God and love Him in our daily walks and in all the spheres of life. He preached a finer humanism, than that of Buddha, by making us realise God in Humanity and Nature. His catholicity made his religion universal in its appeal and the beautiful life and the rigid discipline, that he demanded from his devotees, leave nothing to be desired

To this fountain-source of love and life, we must repair to-day, with humility, for inspiration and guidance. The world-federation is still a dream, the brotherhood of man still a fancy, the spiritualisation of life is still a mere ideal to be realised We must bend before him and ask for his grace for the suffering humanity.

Let his spotless serene life be our model, let his message of love be our gospel, let his ethical idealism be the source of our energy, and let his light illumine the dark path of our life. Let us forget the stir and stress of modern life and go back to him for discipline into that life of sweetness, which has an immanent vision of the divine. Let us embrace his philosophy of love, which dispenses with all relative standards of ethics and religion, and gives us delight supernal in the blessed communion with the transcendent.

Traces of the Hindu Culture in the Paradise of the Pacific

The island chain of Hawaii, in the words of the great American comic writer, Mark Twain, is 'the loveliest fleet of islands that lie anchored in any ocean'. Before I came, I heard so much of its romance and mystery that I had an idea that Hawaii unvisited would have been better than Hawaii visited, but now that I have actually been in Honolulu, I can say that it requires to be revisited.

What charms the new-comer, is not only scenic beauty of colourful hills and dales, the sandy beaches, the palm groves, the one and thousand flowers that bloom on the wayside, but the real warmhearted friendliness of the Hawaiian people

This friendly love of the race has made Hawaii the melting pot of nations and races and I believe with all sincerity that Hawaii can show us the way to the noble vision of universal brotherhood and international fellowship.

My stay in Hawaii has been short, but I have tried to see a little of the most important culture- forces here. I have met peoples of different views and thoughts and have also glanced at the most important places of interest in this magic town of Honolulu

The first thing that attracted my notice on the very first morning after my arrival, is the profusion of hibiscus flowers of different colours and numerous varieties. These bright flowers brought back to my memory scenes of my homeland and at once the bright idea came to my mind that a poetic name for this enchanting island Group may be "The Land of Hibiscus."

I am not a botanist, but I know hibiscus to be a very common flower in India. I do not know whether it is native of India or not, but I believe from literary evidences that this flower has its birthland in India. I think so, because in the Sanskrit hymn to the nine planets, the colour of the rising sun has been compared with that of the red-coloured hibiscus.

Hindu Colonists

I did not stop there. Passing by the statue of Kamehameha, the Great, I began to think about the prehistoric migration of human race. All at once in my mind's eye, there flashed a procession of brave Hindu colonists, who went out with intrepid courage and unbended zeal to distant lands.

There is no scientific proof, but I dreamt that these heroes whose names are unknown, sailed on tiny boats and crossed the vast ocean. The map of the globe unrolled before my mind, and I saw people sailing from India to Indonesia, from there to Malayanesia, Micronasia, Melenesia and Polynesia.

Now this trail of the Hindu sailors and colonists are evident up to Indonesia, China, Korea, Cambodia, and Japan. Did it cease there? Or did these brave culture-priests went further forward?

The Pre-Columbian American civilization is surely Asian. Who are these immigrants of the prehistoric days?

There are very little chances of a correct scientific answer. I am making such a study. I shall be grateful to my Hawaiian friends, if they would kindly correspond with me at 2030 Broadway, San Francisco in the American Academy of Asian Studies, San Francisco, California

Stone Emblem

I met a Hawaiian friend who claims his descent from the royal line as well as from the High Priests of Hawaii He has in his possession a stone emblem. This stone was worshipped and has been kept up in the family with veneration I believe that it has some definite resemblance with the Hindu custom of worshipping the deity, through the stone emblem of Salagrama or God-stone.

Another friend here is collecting materials to write a story as to the existence of Sanskrit words in the Hawaiian language

Next let us consider the case of Kahunas. How unjustly they might have been disparaged There cannot be any doubt that these people knew much of hypnotic and yogic powers. This science of mental powers was at its highest development in India Is it not a matter for significant serious study ?

Then, the Hawaiian conception of Trinity compares favourably with the Hindu Trinity of Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the protector, and Siva, the destroyer.

While strolling through the Bishop's Museum, I came across the fire-sticks of the ancient Hawaiian people. They have great resemblances with the Vedic method of raising fire with the help of such sticks

Independent Culture

I do not deny that Polynesia may have an independent culture of its own. The characteristics which distinguish the

Polynesians and Polynesian culture from other peoples and other creeds might have originated in one island group of the South Seas and then it might have spread through the rest.

But before you accept any theory, you should approach the subject broad-mindedly in a scientific attitude. The application of modern archeological techniques and interpretations is surely necessary, but in your fondness for the same, why should you banish the consideration of the Hindu tradition embedded in the Hindu Puranas, written in the past, giving us stories of our race in an archaic style and manner? Why should you shut your eyes to the lights which comparative religion, philology, the past legends and traditions of Hawaii throw in the matter?

I am sure that my kind readers will not impute any bias to me. I am a Hindu and a resident of India, but what do the Indians gain if it is established that the old Polynesians, the old Amerinds were original immigrants from India. Nothing, surely we gain nothing, but I must say with all the emphasis that I can command that the Indologists both in Europe and America have not studied the Hindu tradition with that amount of care and attention which it deserved.

Let us therefore join hands and go to the study of the unknown past of glorious peoples like Mayas, Aztecs and others with the only idea before us that we want to recreate the ancient history of the world We want to learn how far it is possible to know the great movements of humanity in days gone by.

I am confident that this fascinating topic will evoke response in many hearts in this beautiful Paradise of the Pacific.

Yes, this is a paradise in a sense. We are dreamers, dreaming how we should form one world-government in which in spite

of veriety, there should be a fundamental unity. The Vedic Seer verily proclaims to the people of the world that men are Sons of Light and Culture, Sweetness and Bliss. These immortal Sons of God should share together and go together.

In her own unique way Hawaii has showed the way and it is therefore fit that we should begin the study of the race movement of the Asiatic people here in this island of joy and love

ALOHA ! I did good-bye to this cosmopolitan city, the crossroads of Pacific with genuine warmth and fellow-feeling It is a matter of regret that Hawaii is not still a state of the United States One thinks of the thundering speeches of Burke and wonders that still arguments are necessary to convert this territory into a state I am sure that the intense love of freedom, which I noticed in the island, should move the hearts of the great American people and that soon the territory will be treated as the 49th state of the United States of America.

Brothers and sisters of Hawaii, your bright, intelligent, eager and forward-looking faces will forever remain in my memory You have already become good citizens of the world. Let God give you strength to march forward in the path of truth, love and charity, and let you build that edifice of union of all nations by your sacrifice and service March on, march on, ye vanguards of world-government. Close down the barriers that have divided the races in the past and let all humanity be united in one great idealism of super manhood and divine spiritualism,

The Folk-songs of Bengal

Beneath the snow-claped peaks of the great Himalayas lies the mystical country of Bengal, the land of beauty and songs. The waves of the ocean beat upon her beautiful feet on the south and mother Bengal sleeps in her lovely plains under the bright sunny sky. There is song in her groves and poetry in her people

The flowers bloom here and there and make the air fragrant—the bees hum and the birds sing and the people sing out all through the varied seasons, in the mellowed beauty of her spring—in the dazzle of her summers—in the torrents of her rains, in the sweetness of her autumn and in the cold of her winter.

Bengal thus is the richest land of songs in the world They welcome the dawn with their morning songs and make the evenings pleasant with choral songs and dances They make their ceremonies and festivals gay and delightful with their chants and melodies.

These folk-songs breathe the atmosphere of open air and rural life and come to us with the freshness and vitality of the village green.

Early marriage was in vogue in the past and the following gives us the picture of a forlorn mother in her lone cottage.

I have gathered cresses sweet,
I have plucked brinjals green,
But alas lone is my cot,
My child is now a bride.
My darling is soft like cream,
How shall she manage other's affairs ?
O how shall she, a little child,
If the others chide ?

In words, that have no poetic grace, the village mother breathes her fond love and they at once turn to magic powers. Thers is no flight of fancy but the grief of the mother adds a heavenly touch to this simple song.

The Bengal mothers are proverbially fond of their children. The cradle songs are varied and charming.

The following lullaby is a pleasant specimen of the wonderful beauty and power of these favourite songs

Come, darling moon ! come !
Kiss the brow of my babe.
I shall give thee fish,
When I carve it
When I husk the grains,
The husks shall be thine
Come, darling moon ! come,
Kiss the brow of my boy,
Thou shalt have sweet milk,
When my cow doth calve,

Gladden sweet moon, gladden,
The moon of my heart.

But, side by side with these lyrics, which seem to grow from mother earth, in form and rythm that bewitches the soul, we have lyrics which are associated with particular names. Most of them are perhaps the works of the singers, whose names the lyrics bear, but they have become national by a host of minstrels who have kept up these folk-songs and lyrics Each singer has added a bit here and there and the songs as they are now available seem to come from the heart of the race.

In India the arts have been for the culture of the soul. They exalt the emotions for attainment of the eternal varieties of life It is, therefore, that songs that are spiritual and that speak of man's ascent to God are found in abundance The songs are couched in simple words, the images are common-place, but the idea transcends the words and takes the listeners to a world of God-vision.

Here is a song from Lalan, who was a faquir, having his hermitage near about Kushtia, an important subdivision of Nadia, but now a District in Pakistan.

"I know not what that beauty is.
I am charmed by the fragrance of his name.

I like to have a sight of him but I know not the way of worship. I know not his place nor his address—Oh how shall I seek him ?

Has he any form ? Shall I think him to be formless shining in the innate effulgence ? Whom shall I ask ? How did he create this world ?

If there be mistakes in the sermon—Oh what shall one do and what shall one think ? Lalan is at a loss".

The songs lose much of the rhythm and beauty in translation but one thing is very striking. Philosophical truths were not things of the closet but filtered down to the masses Lalan was an ordinary faquir but his songs speak of the deepest problems of human life. In India, even an ordinary man feels that the being that is in the clouds and air maintains a sweet relationship of love, so that we should try to see into the life of things and find out our beloved in the deep harmony that pervades nature. The songs that speak of the love between Radha and Krishna, the lyrics that glorify the deeds of Krishna are very numerous. They have a unique charm, which fascinates the simple folks of the village year after year. They never lose their freshness and persuasive grace and the proverb runs that there can be no songs without Kanu (Krishna).

'Where art thou Kanai ?
We seek through the wood but find you not,
Oh ! How shall we go home ?
Oh what shall we say to mother Yoshada ?
We pause and pause.
We know not what is in thy mind.
What feeling moves thy heart ?
We see that thou art away to other lands.
While playing awhile with us.
Shalt thou not come Nandalala !
To tend thy loving cattle.
Lalan says that these are His sports,

But he is afraid that he may not
get refuge in His lotus feet'.

It was Chaitanya who brought this divine love to the door of all So along with songs that speak of Radha and Krishna, there are lyrics glorifying the founder of Bengal Vaishnavism. They are spontanneous outpourings of the gratitude, the people of Bengal feel for this God-intoxicated man who showed by his life and deeds how love of God can be the most supreme object of our life here on earth. Here is one of Lalan ;—

Tell me Nimai, tell me in sooth.
Why dost thou weep for Radha—
Why so strangely in thy sleep ?
The glory of this Radha,
Is beyond the Vedas—
Brahma does not know her charm,
In his deep meditation.
How shall I know her ?
Tell me Nimai, tell me true who is Radha to thee ?
Who taught thee, the name in thy childhood,
Thou art my little child—
But I know not thy mind.
Lalan says—the son of Sachi,
Is the wonder of the world.

Bengal is truly a land of songs. It is said that she has thirteen festivals in the twelve months. As a matter of fact there are numerous festive occasions in Bengali Society which are made gay with songs and dances. There are songs known as 'Baramasyas' which describe the joys and sorrows of the common people in the different months of the year. Then there

are songs dedicated to special deities. Manasa, the Goddess of snakes is honoured by many songs and operas relate in moving language how Behula restored her dead husband, bitten by a snake, by her staunch devotion. The ideal of steadfast love to the husdand is one of the race-ideals of India *and her poetry gives expression to this, every now and then, in* words that appeal and in songs that inspire. Then there are Agamani and Bijoya songs which describe in sweet and tender words the coming and going up of Uma to her parents' house. These songs spring direct out of the soft and tender heart of Mother Bengal and have a wealth of expression and emotion which cling close to the crest of the human heart. Uma is the daughter of king Himalaya and she is married to the great God Shiva. The mother Menaka longs for her and she is allowed to come to the earth for three days only The Agamani songs are welcome songs and many of them portray the pathos of the fond mother. The Vijoya songs are farewell songs and are full of poignant grief of the mother. The following will give us an idea of the tenderness when these songs are sung in the beautiful autumn days.

'Oh thou mountain king! When Uma shall come back this time,
I would not send her again,
They may speak ill of me but I would not listen,
If Shiva, the conqueror of death comes himself,
And entreats for sending her,
Mother and daughter we would quarrel with him
We would not care for him as a son-in-law.
The Brahmin Ramprasad says that this grief is not unfair,
As Shiva moves in crematories and places of execution,
And never thinks of his home.

This is a morning piece. The melodic effect and rich suggestions of the original are missed in the translation. It would not therefore be possible for a foreigner to understand how this song can capture the souls of the people

Then there are the harvest songs. India is pre-eminently an agricultural country. When in the month of Paush, the grains have been gathered, the minds of the people run riot in joy and glee and songs pour forth from every nook and corner of the rural area.

After the harvest, come several spring festivals. Each festival has its own peculiar lyrics and songs and each season has its own wealth of poetry. Life was easy and happy, cares and anxieties were few, so there was ample opprtunity for setting to music the simple feelings and joys of the rural folk-

There is grace and unique beauty round about these songs which breathe the atmosphere of mother earth. There is not a shade of emotion, not a situation in life which escapes the notice of these village bards.

Then there are Bhatiali songs, which the boatman sings, while the boats flow on the high current during the ebb-tide These have a peculiar mannerism and have given rise to a class of compositions which have now no trace to its origin. The open air sincerity of these songs go direct into the heart of the people

Time and space do not permit me to make selections from these songs whose number is legion. There has as yet been no serious attempt in collecting these folk-songs. The song-writers are many and they have given us a vast quantity of songs These breathe the fragrance of the village life

but they do not lack music and beauty. They are a part and parcel of the people in variety. They remain unsurpassed One who wants to go deeper into the spirit of the people must make an intimate study of these folk songs

These folk-songs still feed the inner life of the Bengali race Their passionate vigour, their sweet appeal are a great power in Bengali life and they influence the Bengali mind. But still through their diversity and variety the soul of India speaks.

The irradiation of the spiritual ideal penetrates them and a mystic yearning pervades them. Moving they are by their emotional and imaginative grandeur, but there is something more than that. In and through them sings the craving soul that yearns for something that is yet to be won.

Life and Education

Human civilization is a progressive development. From the cave man of the prehistoric days to the modern man of today, it is a long and tedious movement of never-ceasing struggles The wonderful history of human culture is surely an abiding course of inspiration and initiative. We have not arrived at the journey's end. The quest after perfection is a cease-less journey. The ideal is never attained but is always to be attained. Infinite are human capacities and infinite are our possibilities. We must go forward. The perfection we seek is like the sun on the horizon It seems that we shall reach it very soon but the nearer we approach, the more it recedes back and opens up a new vista. As we move onward, our visions broaden and the goal we seek lures us into newer and untrodden paths.

Teachers are the vanguards of human culture. They prepare soldiers for this great battle for existence. We require an education that satisfies the demands of life. We want teachers that can prepare men for survival and continuous development in the grim struggle of life. Teachers are the harbingers of sweetness and culture. They make life worth living Our social and political life requires men of light and leading. Teachers are the trainers of leaders who are men of right thinking and right activities.

A teacher should be a man of plain living and high thinking. His responsibilities are very great. He must blend in him the qualities of the accomplished scientist with those of the skilled artist. He must be the ideal Brahmin whose faith is in God He must be the perfect Guru who knows how to take his pupils across the dark ocean of ignorance He must be the inspiring Ulema, the noble guide and the erudite philosopher on the path of life and the world.

Teaching is illumination and infusion. It is preparation for the complete living of the man in Truth, Beauty and Goodness. It is not stuffing with unintelligible facts, it is not burdening the mind with things and informations not understood and appreciated by the students.

We have two fine stories in the old legends about Aruni and Uddalak. Their teacher set them to difficult and onerous duties and they discharged the same with care and devotion. Thereupon the teacher blessed them to be versed in all sacred lore and they became so. How was it done? It was by infusion into the hearts of the disciples the spirit of enquiry and the love for truth. The teacher touched the electric knob and the hearts and the minds of the pupils were illumined. The modern system of education in vogue in our country is pernicious. It encourages crammings, it has no touch with life's demands It makes examination the be-all and end-all of education There is an excess of examination and an unfruitful bother over them.

We want boys and girls to do and to be and not merely to know. Education is for life and life is not for education. Education, if given efficiently and properly world be evident in more wholesome attitudes towards life and its problems It must broaden the outlook of the boys and girls. It is the capacity to do and not a meaningless memory culture. To

put in a nut-shell the ideal education must lead men to harmony, must help them in arriving at a synthesis and a complete whole and thereby must enable them to have peace and happiness.

The real aim is growth in and through better and better living and development through an elevating and enriching stream of experiences. Knowledge is not the ideal of education but training The ideal is not instruction but movement and progress, not *information* but the unfolding of the latent faculties.

The light of truth is dormant in all human beings. Education does not bring the light, it merely takes off the screen of ignorance and the effulgence of the inner light shines in glory and splendour. Our project is complete and harmonious development of body, mind and character. We want active and efficient men and women who would be in a position to carry on the lamp of culture through the chaos and confusion of daily life The guidance of education is not and should not be external imposition It is freeing the life-process for its own most adequate fulfilment.

We should therefore endeavour to develop the powers of observation. This is an age of science. Science, as every body knows, is a systematised body of knowledge obtained by powers of perception, observation and reasoning both deductive and inductive. Teachers should show and open the process of knowledge. Acquisition of knowledge would then be a constructive process and would bring delight to the learner

Education is not an affair of telling and being told. This is known and talked about but is seldom enacted into practice.

We must inculcate love for truth against all fancied notions, superstitious and treasured ideas. One day the Ptolemic theory of the world was held by the most learned but it had to give way to the Copernican one. The minds of the students should remain open and receptive. They should welcome changes, where advanced thoughts make them necessary They must have the scientific attitude towards everything in life. They are expected to develop this or that fact of truth out of their own minds Accordingly they must be told to think things out or work things out, for themselves by their own initiatives. We should not kill off their constructive and appreciative abilities We should help the growth and development of their conscience and understanding It should never be blind following but at every step it must be the free exercise of intelligence.

For this a new orientation of outlook is necessary The west is always making new experiments and developing educational schemes. The Project Curriculum is the latest in fashion. It is difficult to introduce projects in our poor Schools, but we can follow the principles and adopt the results obtained on this experiment to the circumstances of our country.

The fundamental ideas are that the lesson should be objective and not subjective. The study should be a demonstration rather than an exercise of memory. It must be seeing through eyes and hearing through ears or in short acquisition of knowledge through our senses When we learn things by direct perceptions, when knowledge proceeds from observation and is obtained by reasoning, it is retained in the memory. We should encourage the spirit of enquiry and enlarge curiosity We should not stifle the natural desire to know the why and how of things There should be telling

little but leading the students to tell. They must learn by doing.

Learning should be a source of joy and enjoyment. The School must be a model of interesting and attractive amusement hall The School should be conducted in such a way so that it fosters development from within by the force of love and sympathy. The School curriculum should be changed and framed in such a way so that it develops a type of wisdom that can grow only out of participation in the living experiences of men It must therefore base it training on actual life-suitations, not for a mere knowledge of abstract art and science, but for proficiency in the use of ideas in the control of practical situations. It must develop the good will, the spirit of service, social sympathies and group-actions, which are necessary for completeness of character.

The boy that finds joy in his lessons needs no cane. Play is nature's active mode of education. The element of play should therefore predominate the atmosphere of School life.

What is needed for the growth and development of the ideal man is character, strength and discipline For this, the element of play and the element of work should be combined so that it fosters an enduring and vitalized large-group-consciousness through projects that enable students to think and feel and act with the group, as a part of it, as it performs its activities and strives to atain its ends.

Cramming and mere knowledge are not the ideals in education. Education is a preparation for life. So we must rather endeavour to foster social activities and recreations. Self-interest is the guiding force in life, but this narrow view

of life should give place to an enlightened, humanistic self-interest, which is made by breadth of outlook and love, which recognises that individual welfare at its highest comes only through general community welfare at its highest.

The projects if chosen rightly and applied methodically will hasten social progress by lifting the works and activities of the vocational world to a higher level for students trained up in active association of vocational labours will take to them in after life with a new zest and a superior efficiency. For this the programme should be as wide as life and should try to discover and understand the total range of habits skills, abilities, forms of thought, ideals and ambitions, that are necessary for the manifold functions in actual life

Discipline depends upon the personality and character of the teachers and the efficiency and the pleasing nature of the system The students should be regarded as members of society and the social ends should determine their course of studies. The course should be such that it makes them healthy, trains them in learning with doing, develops tastes and creates a tolerant open mind, sound judgement, ability to execute plans, habits of service, energy, sociality and tact.

The factors in development are environment, home influences and influences of society. A teacher is an organiser and a governor He is guide, philosopher and friend He is the fountain-source of development and discipline He should try to win the love and admiration of the pupils under his care. He should not be the destroyer of all joys in life. He should not be dreaded The scholar is a seedling and requires nurture and tender care, wants love and affection of the florist, the passion and interest of a fond lover.

The first thing needed is a changed attitude towards the environment. The needs and interests of present day life in our immediate environment and the world at large should receive the first attention. There should be co-operation between parents and guardians on the one hand and the School and the teachers on the other hand. No man lives for himself. The roots of the present are deep in the past We, who live in the present live for the future also. Social progress and social development should be our goal. We must bring about a better and a happier world. The teacher therefore should assist youths to organize their contacts with reality by both thought and action.

Teaching is an art. It does not come of itself but is to be learnt. It is a psychological process. Intelligence has laws for its development and unfolding. A teacher should make himself well-versed in psychology and sociology. He should enrich his own knowledge by investigation and experiment. He must have an enquiring mind and should gather information from all possible sources He should inculcate his own love of truth into the minds of his own pupils, so that the scholars should in their turn enlarge the domain of knowledge by fresh analysis and discovery

What is wanted from the teachers is the will to serve, desire to learn, and an intense application to improve and extend the mind of his pupils. He should be a man of culture. In order to develop aesthetic appreciation and production, he must have the love of culture, the love of goodness and sweetness. As a poet has said :—

His high endeavours are an
inward light.

That makes the path before
him always bright.

Life is complex to day and we require a higher and nobler type of teachers for bringing up the growing generations. At the present time a profound change in human thought and human outlook is going on. Our civilization is taking a new shape just before our eyes. We want education to keep pece with this change. World-federation is no longer a dream but is going to be an actual fact.

We want men and women, who have the large vision to accept the whole world as their kin. We want men and women who will do their very best and will do it every day for the furtherance of the cause of humanity.

The present course of study is an inherited misfit from the past. Its outlook is narrow The neo-education should be international in outlook Our past achievements except in science have been prejudiced and biased, because of a crude conception of nationalism. We shall have to begin anew the study of social sciences. Our history, our politics, our economics, nay even our arts and literatures should give up the out-worn colour of by-gone times and should be re-written on the truer and better background of human equality and unity. It is not enough for a man to be good. He must be good for the new world in which he will live. Discipline, culture, social efficiency, and personal refinement, a man must have not for their own sake only, but as for aids increasing his capacity to live as a member of society by sharing in the common life. The new education must take stock of this changed outlook in life and must bring up men and women, whose culture and attainments enable them to adjust themselves to the international social frame-work and get from life the most, by contributing their own share of se rvice.

The Future of Religion

If we trace the history of man from remote past up to the present day, we find that religion has played a very important part in the evolution of human society and human civilization. Reason distinguishes man from all other forms of life. But still in the wonderful progress made by man, there has been an element of super-rational force which uptill now has come from religion Man by nature is selfish, and wants maximum of comforts with the minimum of effort. But all progress demands sacrifice of self-interest for the sake of the collective good and this motive-force has so long been supplied by religion.

This is an age of reason and in the present age of great intellectual awakening, religion is daily losing hold upon the heart of the people It is therefore natural to ask what would be the future of religion Will it vanish from the face of the earth or will it take a new shape ?

This is surely a vital problem of the day. Evolution requires that there should be stress and rivalry for the development of any living organism. Uptill now there has been struggle between human intellect and human faith and this struggle has been the ruling force in shaping human destiny.

It is, therefore, reasonable to expect that if human progress is not liable to extinction, there will be some sort of

super-rational sanction for human conduct. We may retain the old name viz. religion for the super-rational sanction.

But it is absolutely clear that this religion will be fundamentally different from any other religion, which has prevailed up to this day

This religion, first, will not be a religion of ritualism. Modern man has surely out-grown the spirit of magic, awe, and wonder from which religious rites and ceremonies evolved. Myths and rituals were things of human childhood and there is hardly any likelihood of their revival. With the growth of philosophy, mankind has discarded idolatory which in its broad sense, covers worship of both limited and unlimited deity. To the man of reason, worship in any form whether of God is equally a meaning-less affair.

The mystery of creation is still unravelled, but so far we know of life and things, we are unable to believe that the universe is the creation of any kind and all-powerful God. We may think that this universe has evolved out of certain mighty energy which is unknown, but this has nothing to do with our fond conceptions of a just, merciful and benevolent creator which has been the solace of mankind in the past.

Even if some be inclined to identify the unknown energy with God, no reasonable man of science will find any meaning in paying homage to this unknown. Homage and worship is the out-going relics of dread and fear, to which man was subject in presence of cruel nature. As man wrested power from her unwilling hands this dread is giving place to a healthy belief in man's own power.

It is therefore beyond all doubt, that the future religion will caste off ritualism and ceremonialism.

Secondly, there will be no belief in revealed truths. Modern man respects the prophet and the founders of the various religions as great benefactors of man kind, but they are alive to the fact that religion is a product of time and evolution and is not a God-given thing. There are many fundamental differences between the revealations of the different seers and this conclusively proves that revealation cannot be the infallible word of God.

The study of comparative religion has taken away much of the so called mystery about religion We now understand that religion is not a super-imposed thing from above, but is the result of human effort and human endeavour and as such should be judged as a human product.

We may accordingly say without any hesitancy that the future religion will bid good-bye to all beliefs in supernatural visions and super-rational revealations. Thirdly it will have no belief in previous or after life There is hardly any proof that there is existence of man after death or of previous birth The common retributive theory seems to be fallacious and incorrect, because no man has ever any consciousness of any wrong done in any previous birth, so the pain he suffers for acts done in a former life appears to be nothing but vindictive punishment, inconsistent with any theory of corrective by a kind God We do not know but as far as we know, we must take this life to be the only life we have. We have no warrent to look before and after and pine for what is not There is nothing to give us any assurance of individual immortality, but we see that humanity exists, though individuals die out.

The theory of collective immortality, accords with the knowledge we have gathered in sciences, namely the theory

of conservation of energy and matter. This will be the pivot of the coming religion. We are to model our lives and character in such a way that we may further the progress of this humanity The future religion will thus be a religion of humanity.

It may be asked by men of the old school where and how this religion will get stimulas for social service and progress which will be its goal. First, in the knowledge, that collective humanity is the abiding reality and secondly in the pleasure which man will get from such work It is not possible to explain why we get pleasure in doing such work, just as to explain why we love a rose It may be that there is some soft affinity, we do not know, such as yajnabalkya dreamt in his theory of connection, through one pervading soul. We come as sparks from the vital energy that is behind the phenomena

Whatever may be the truth, we know not, but it is absolutely clear that as knowledge increases, and society improves, man will devote himself more and more to the service of humanity.

The future religion will thus be a religion of progress The ideal of life would be to make the most of this life, forgetting all fond delusions about attainment of God, and happiness in after life But it will not therefore be a life of hedonism, but on the other-hand a life of strennous devotion and service Free from all false fear,free from worry about after-life, men will find ample time and energy for serving mankind and dedicating himself for the cause of human progress.

Man has long been under the sway of pseudo religion, and has suffered much for the same. Let him come forward with courage and conviction and by his own work bring the wished-for heaven on earth.

Our mission will be one of hope and joy, one of love and service. We should make the world more beautiful, more happy, more joyous, by this life of active service than we can expect by living a life of seclusion.

Religion, will thus in future be freed from all trammels and will thereby become the impulse for wider achievements and greater advancements. It will in this new form be the life and light of all human aspirations and will be the messenger of a new era of peace and prosperity, of bliss and progress.

The main ideas of this essay finds a nice parallel in the utterances of Julian Huxley, a noted scientist of our age. He says :—"The advance of natural science, logic and psychology have brought us to a stage at which God is no longer a useful hypothesis. Natural science has pushed God into an ever greater remoteness. until his function as a ruler and dictator disappears and he becomes a mere first cause or vague general principle " But inspite of this lost faith in Divinity, life is not a mere burden. It is worth living. I conclude with a quotation from the self-same valuable book,'Man is the modern world to corroborate my views.

"I believe that life can be worth living. I believe this inspite of pain, squalor, cruelty, unhappiness and death. I do not believe that it is necessarily worth living, but only that for most people it can be." Whether it hurts us or not, the fact cannot be denied that modern man is a staunch believer in progress. Man shall follow progress, whose potentialities are unlimited.

Ramesh Chandra Dutt as a Novelist

With the impact with European culture, there was an awakening in India which may be well compared with the Renaissance in Europe. The soft melody of the *Vaishnava* literature was a thing of the past and there was a complete fall in our national life in the latter 17th and the early 18th centuries The wide outlook that we received, while coming in contact with the life and letters of the West led to the rebirth of intellectual life and moral nature of the Indian people. The impulse of this regeneration was felt for the first time in Rajah Rammohan Roy, who was the pioneer of us in the domain of modern politics, religion and literature and has hence been rightly called the father of modern India. But this Renaissance of modern Bengal came to its full vigour with Bankimchandra As a man of unique personality, wielding powerful influence over his age by the touch of his magnetic genius, Bankimchandra dominated the period from 1865, the year of the publication of *Durgeshnandini*, up to 1894, the year of his death This period is therefore stamped with his individuality and hence may be called the age of Bankim, Rameshchandra ranks second only to Bankim among the literary artists of the age. The influence of the age of Bankim and Ramesh is still potent among us, in spite of latest tendencies towards newer paths and fresher avenues

They are like twin stars shining in the firmament, one dazzling with its brilliance, the other dimly scintillating but

s till having a steady light that attracts one's notice, Rameshchandra lacks the industry and the rapidity of output, to be found in Bankim. The story runs current how Bankim induced Rameshchandra to write in his mother tongue and it was surely an auspicious moment for the Bengali literature, when he was thus made conscious of the latent genius that was in him, for in the field of historical novels he surpassed his mentor, in points of detailed accuracy by which he tried to recreate the past in such a manner that we breathe the very atmosphere of the place and the time represented.

We have six novels from his pen, four of which are historical and the rest two are concerned with rural pictures of the middle class life in Bengal, which for the reforming zeal present in the author, may be rightly called novels of purpose

Though there is an abundance of adventures and thrilling incidents, which may lead one to believe that Romance pervades his novels, still, to clear all doubts, we may say that Realism is his forte Set against a back-ground of historical fact, which never takes the dominant part except in his *Maharastrer Jiban Probhat*, he delights in weaving the love-stories of middleclass people, depcting with real insight their delicate gradations of thought and feeling. The subtle imaginative experiences of these ordinary men and women gain colour and force, placed in contrast with vast and complicated situations in which great historical personages take part. The start in the Bengali Novel was given with a novel of manners, but Bankimchandra deserted the path so chosen and delineated high life in his novels. He was eminetly bourgeois, but Rameshchandra blended the portrayal of every-day experiences with events of larger issues in national life, as for example, in *Bangabijeta*, the exploits of Todarmall,

the conqueror of Bengal, are artistically twined round the intimate study of the love between Sarala the artless girl, exquisite in her childlike simplicity and Indranath, the heroic knight, who succoured the sensitive widow of Rajah Samarsingha in their woeful plight.

Bangabijeta is thus a misnomer, because the central interest of the story never clings round the din of the battles raging far away for the conquest of Bengal. We wish to loiter over the idyllic pictures of rural life at Rudrapur in the company of the transparent souls of Nabin and Amala. There is a solemnity and dignity in the portrayal of Mahashweta, enveloped in the mysteries of her sufferings. Then as we reach Shakuni, when the plot thickens, we come in touch with a diplomatic man, who, for his wily feats, his clever wit and his crafty designs, is a perfect rival of his namesake in the Mahabharat. 'Bimala" is a lesser Ayesha, inferior in beauty and sweetness, but more deeply touching the chords of our sympathetic hearts.

Bimala is surely a tragic character. The motherless girl had no comforts in her home. Pure and virtuous as she was, she had an instinctive horror for vice and sin and consequently the deep love and reverence she had for her father was not an unmixed blessing to her, because the burden of sins of her father lay heavy on her soul Magnificently rational and self-controlled at the crisis of the action, when she was in the clutches of Shakuni, dignified and admirable in her unfulfilled love, she is still a pathetic character A profound sense of morality pervades the whole action and this moral tone is one admirable feature which is to be found in all his novels To-day when we are jubilant over our novels dealing with sex-psychology, when decency and good sense are conspicuous by their absence, we forget the fundamental

principle of art, that it is to elevate us to the higher spheres of truth and beauty. In art, there should be a steady devotion to the ideals of eternal love, truth and beauty and when art parts company with the spirit of goodness and morality it becomes vile and vulgar and this debased and corrupt art is a source of great danger to individuals and to the society as a whole.

This lofty tone of purity is moreover conveyed in a flexible language, in a racy and colloquial style, which, though never rising to the imaginative heights of Bankim that please one with their subtle cadences, or however wanting in flavour it may be, serves the requirements of the story-teller. Lacking in the daintiness of Bankim or the melody of Rabindranath, it has still a force and vigour in it.

In *Madhavikankan*, the plot develops with lissom ease but still it is amorphous, for the conflict of love with which the book opens loses itself, in the bewildering multitudes of incidents and adventures in which the hero takes part. Though intense in pathos and brilliant at times, the story is not well-wrought. The sub-plot of Zelekha is drawn with so many colours that the outline is enveloped in a cloud.

But when we come to his third novel, we are in touch with his wealth of antiquarian lore as well as his delight in the colour and movement of bygone times. But here also he is a close imitator of Scott. "He succeeded because in place of hauling the past into the present and thereby dis-connecting past and present, he boldly projected the present into the past, using his knowledge of contemporary life to humanise his old-world characters. The sturdy realism of Rameshchandra is evident from a study of his social novels. We have a parallel of Sudha, the shy Bengali girl, typical in her simplicity

and innocence in Saraju, the Rajput, heroine of this book. We get a bright glimpse into the character and life of the builder of the Marhatta nation, but still the interest is concentrated in Raghunath, who is a creation of his brain. The love of Raghunath and Saraju proceeds smoothly through battles and intrigues, which concerned the destiny of a rising people. Herein lies the charm and beauty of his art and this method of historical fiction he adapted from Scott. One of the notable features in his historical novels is the introduction of songs in the mouth of the ministrels. They are not poems but are still suffused with poetic flavour. In beauty and sweetness, they have a place beside the prose-poems of the Russian writer—Turgenev.

The historical characters of Joysinha and Sivaji are painted with rare skill That famous speech of Joysinha in which he deprecates the use of unfair means for the attainment of noble ends, rings with the innate purity of his soul This speech should be read and re read by the present-day politicians, who are in favour of licensed frauds and falsehoods in politics.

Rajput Jiban Sandhya or the Evening of Rajput Life is far inferior to the 'Dawn of the Marhatta Life' in point of technique and setting Herein the author delineates the decline of the Rajput power and the picture, we get of Protap, does not satisfy us. Puspa, the heroine is colourless. The Bhil girl resembles Zelekha but lacks in the romance which enveloped Zelekha.

After this book, Rameshchandra bids farewell to historical fiction and takes up the role of the reformer in the two social novels that he wrote after this period.

Sansar has a unique place in the world of noveldom. Here is a picture which we may call Turneresque in its

simplicity and sweetness. Round the lake of palms shining in its wealth of green verdure, stands the little hamlet and there happens the little drama with which we are concerned. Sarat and Sudha are a lovely pair and the story of the development of their love, through commonplace incidents, fills us with delight. We have in this book a very faithful picture of the Bengali life in all its minute details, we find Bengali men and women with their merits and defects The style is never stiff but is full of plasticity and the novel moves on with a nimble grace With the zeal of the preacher at heart, Rameshchndra exposes the injustices that are in society, but he does not leave us with the intricacy of recondite problems, he has wherever possible, suggested remedies for the diseases of our social life. As a picture of home-life, with its clear home-affection, as a novel dealing with the domesticities beloved by the Bengali people, this work will remain for ever a favourite with us. The sincere love and affection, he has shown towards the peasantry, by depicting them at their best, proves clearly his love for humanity. To curious readers, we may refer the chapter in which the love-dialogue takes place between Sanatan and his wife or the chapter in which there is conversation between Bindu and Sanatan's wife. This feeling of equality and fraternity is also to be found in the next piece known as *Samaj* This last work of him, in the field of Bengali letters can not cope with *Sansar* but yet there are many things to love and admire there.

In conclusion, if we are to make an impartial estimate of Rameshchandra as an artist, we are to say that he does not belong to the first class The richness of expression and creative activity which mark the writings of men of rare genius are not to be found in him. But among the writers of the second rank, his books will ever remain popular for their stimulating vigour, their spiritual tonic influence and last but not the least, for the glorification of home-life.

the tree of vision has been a living growth, spreading out its branches and twigs each day of his life, in ever fresh tints and colours and with awe and wonder we look upon his mighty genius which eludes our grasp, because of its infinite varieties But still in the midst of his variety and manysidedness, we notice two most striking characteristics, which may be called the most significant features of his poetry.

To divide a man's life into periods often leads to faulty conceptions, for our life is a continuous growth. Everything that we feel and see is never lost but on the contrary affects our sub-conscious mind and appears and re-appears in moments when we least expect it Periods in life are, therefore, never distinct from one another; but very often exert reciprocal influences over the rest. Bearing in mind, this progressive growth of human life, we may still find two significant and distinct periods in the poet's life One, beginning with the poet's initiation into poetry to the completion of his book "Naivedya," the other commencing with "Gitanjali" and up till his death.

The first is the period of journey, in which his suprasensitive poetic soul discovered the harmony, that exists between man and the outer world, not by means of scholastic reasoning, not by deep meditation, but by means of an inner vision, all his own or which may be better called as peculiarly Indian From the earliest dawn of mankind on earth, India, through her great seers and sages, have tried to unravel the mystery of life and has learnt by her Sadhana that the ultimate Truth and Beauty dawns upon the soul of a man, all on a sudden, by a sudden revelation, but it can never be approached by intellect and learning alone India, therefore, always aspires for spiritual communion and mystic illumination, only keeping the heart of the seeker ready for

this sudden flash, which, if ever it comes, in the life of a man, enables him to to realise the highest truths, all at once and see into the life of things. India has ever been in quest of this intuitive vision, to realise this unity, in the midst of diversity and to comprehend life and world, in its totality. The poet has tried, by means of his imaginative insight, to discover this key of life, in this first period of his career. Through diverse poetic and emotional experiences, the poet-prophet of India realised and assimilated the fundamental unity of life, the essential harmony, that reigns behind the apparent chaos.

The second period is a period of dedication in which the poet offers his soul as an offering to the God of Beauty, Truth and Love, and tries to express in inimitable tunes and words the joy of the Communion. A fervent spiritual ecstasy marks this period. The poet has been able to lift the veil which screens the abiding Reality from our vision, the veil which brings about the darkness and sorrow of life and in a mood of loving participation in the great symphony of life, he pours forth his full heart in profuse strains of unpremeditated art. The poet drank deep into the fountain of Vaishnava lyrics and Upanishadas, things of the highest realisation and truths, felt and realised by Sadhakas after long years of meditation and search, and then he clothed these eternal verities, in poems of unparalleled sweetness. This rain of melody came upon the modern world, weary with its fever and fret, like a gentle shower, embalmed with the unknown fragrance and the whole world came to listen to his wonderful music to find a way out of this joyless modern life, to seek out that flood of light, which may illumine the cloudy night of modern civilization The intense spirituality, the inexpressible melody and force of the poetry of this period reveals to the world, the message of the age-long

culture of India and remains unsurpassed in the literature of the world, for its depth and poignancy.

In his Hymn to Intellectual Beauty, Shelley acknowledged his deep love for an unknown and awful power of loveliness, which would give to this world, things which are beyond all human expression, a love which grew in him in his very infancy and which, he believed, had power to free this world from its dark slavery. Rabindranath, too, felt the presence of this unseen and invisible spirit of Harmony and the poems of this first period, are replete with many instances, which reveal the poet's growing love and intimacy for this unknown Glory of Love. He feels himself to be the lyre in the beautiful hands of this Beauty, giving out melodies which are not his own, but which comes out as it were from the very heart of that soul of Love in an abundance of rich music, which is of the very essence of Heaven. Day in and day out, he weaves out beautiful forms to clothe his beautiful experiences with this spirit and we see how his intimacy with Nature ripens through an emotional unfolding of his pure poetic soul and how he slowly realises the unity, that pervades the world, the harmony that remains unheard, because of the turmoil of the world, not through conscious efforts, but through exquisite poetic feelings

In one of his letters, the poet has said : "The joy that we feel in nature is due to our feeling of oneness with her. We pulsate, we vibrate with the trees and grass, with the currents of water and air, with the whirl of light and darkness, with the movements of the starry universe, and with the myriad orders of living beings........ If the atoms and molecules of the world were not our kith and kin, if the infinite space and time had not been vibrating in our souls and joys, we could not have a feeling of joy in our relations with the

outside world. We belong to the same genus as what we call the world of matter is, for had it not been so, we would not have found our homes in the same universe, but there would have been two world systems"

This is nothing but the introspective intuition of the Upanishada seers, who realised the Infinite in the finite world, the One in the many, the Absolute in the world of change, and sang out in a joyful chorus :—

'We pay homage to the Lord that is in fire, and in water; the Lord that pervades the entire universe, the Lord that is within the herbs and the lordly trees." In his poem 'The Awakening of the Fountain" the first glimpse of this Truth flashed upon him and he went on renewing this acquaintance, as he grew up and tried to grasp this invisible Force, sometimes as his Lord, sometimes as his Lady-love, sometimes as his guide and Guru.

The perception of this Infinite Love, that dissolves all perplexities, is innate in the soil of India and it is for this reason, that his own people has never acclaimed him with that note of wonder and awe, with which he has been hailed by the outside world. His individuality consists in the flawless and faultless expression, in which he has clothed the experiences of these moments of mystic Bliss and Joy and to understand him thoroughly and to comprehend his towering genius, we cannot but study the culture and Sadhana, that fostered his genius

If we take the pains to do so, we shall come to see that the immortal melody, the ineffable utterance, is not a sudden growth, but the budding of a flower, the seed of which was sown thirty centuries ago in the forest-hermitage of India He is our seer of the new age, who feels deeply the abiding

Reality and Love that reigns in joy behind the shadow-shows of this cruel and hard life. He sings as a prophet :—

"In this my seven-storied house, in this my home of endless lives, I am bound in thousand links with the earth and the water—I am linked knot by knot."

This love is something more than Wordsworthian. It is inspired by the philosophy of God-consciousness, which India has reached through millions of God-seekers.

In the second period, this consciousness of the oneness, the feeling of the totality of things is deepened and widened by the advent of age and on experience of the sad music of Humanity. With his growing piety and love, he saw into the very source of Life energy, and struck with awe and veneration, he brings his offerings of song, to the blessed feet of the Lord. He became wedded to this Super-Soul and dedicated his fullest energy as a homage to this Inner Occen of joy. This, the poet did out of his spontaneous cry for Truth and Beauty, by listening to the voice of his own heart. Herein lies the excellence and monumental creation of Rabindranath.

Our Shastras always enjoin this dedication of our soul to the God-soul, this blending of the harmony that is in us, with the Harmony of the Over-soul It is what has been called Saranapatti or self-surrender to the soul of the universe. The rapture of the devotee finds a new vehicle for the inspiration of the whole Harmony. The poet only reveals it a little more fully, a little more sweetly. The rhythm and cadence captivate our souls and lead us unawares to a region of goodness and godliness The intense sweetness sends forth new and unknown torches of truth, in colours divine and splendours unearthly. The poetry of this

period is a storehouse of nectar, which would nourish the men and women of the centuries to be.

In this poetic mood, in this spiritual ecstasy, the poet speaks up —

"Let only the little be left of me, whereby I may name Thee my all.

Let only the little be left of my will, whereby I may feel Thee on every side and come to Thee in everything and offer to Thee, my love every moment

Let only that little be left of me, whereby I may never hide Thee.

Let only that little of my fetters be left, whereby I am bound with Thy will and The purpose is carried out in my life—and that is the fetter of Thy love—"

English Gitanjli, 34

How similar in tone and spirit with the injunctions of the Song Celestial —

"Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you sacrifice or offer, whatever penance you make, dedicate everything to me,"

This philosophy of sacrifice has been made into the finest song in the hands of the artist and we are in raptures over the song, without thinking for a moment that comes out of the highest truth envisaged by the Sages of old. Poems of this spiritual communion, so full of surprise enables us to realise "our voice as in a dream" perhaps for the first time, the voice we are seeking all through life.

It is needless to add instances, for this odour of the mystic world flows out from every line. I would only note one more poem and shall ask the gentle reader to read the rest in the light of the above criticism.

The 76th poem of the Engish Gitanjali runs thus:—
"Day after day, O lord of my life, shall I stand before Thee face to face?

With folded hands, O lord of all world, shall I stand before Thee face to face?

Under the great sky in solitude and silence, with humble heart, shall I stand before Thee face to face?

In this laborious word of Thine, tumultuous with toil and with struggle, among hurrying crowds, shall I stand before Thee face to face?

And when my work shall be done in this world, O King of King, alone and speechless shall I stand before Thee face to face?"

What a glorious lyric I think it is difficult to find its peer from the literature of the world. This is no idle song of an idle day—it soars above the frivolity of the ordinary life and fills the empty heart with the ambrosia of the other world. In presence of this exquisite outpourings of the inner soul, we join with the poet and our lives take its voyage to our eternal home in one deep salutation to the Lord of Light and Life. Love of God is the abiding source of our culture and Rabindranath brings back to us even in this age of scepticism, the sincere convictions of a highly sensitive soul. With him, we try to look, upon life through a new angle of vision and slowly and steadily we realise, little by little, how a life without

God is no life at all and the call of our Sages of old to lead a godly life was the truest call in our life.

To quote the words of W. B. Yeats, another poet of great powers, who introduced Rabindranath to the Western world: "We had not known that we believed in Him, yet looking backward upon our life, we discover in our exploration of the pathways of woods, in our delight in the lonely places of hills, in that mysterious claim we have made unavailingly, in the women that we have loved, the emotion that created this insidious sweetness." As we go through the poems of Tagore, our hearts are purified of their dross and we become simple and straight, like a flute of reed for God to fill us with music. We are ennobled and uplifted from the sordid plane in which we move, we are saved from the perils of over-much desire and thus become worthy of God's full acceptance.

This message of Unity and Love is in Rabindranath and it would not do to judge him as a mere poet, as an artist of rare creative genius—he is rather the creative evolution of the sprit of India.

To sum up, Rabindranath is the incarnation of the soul of India. He stands pre-eminently as the Messiah of our culture bringing to the fever-stricken world the message of Love. The essence of his art, which is alike the essence of Indian Life and culture, is to see deep into the heart of things and to feel in a moment of joy or spritual vision that life is divine, that the world is divine, that whatever we see and hear, whatever we touch and taste, whatever we see and smell is from and of God. The rainbow-tints, the golden sunset, the mellow moonlight, the starry heavens, all bestow the peace and benediction that is of God, which they bring to us to tear

up the meshes which entangle us and open our benumbed hearts for the inflow of the divine energy. Realising this Unity, the Oneness ,with all that is, and all that world be, we are to live the God's life on earth and fulfil His mission. If we try to grasp these underlying principles of his poetry, we shall be able to enter into the deeper meaning and significance of the poet's song : "I have had my invitation to this world's festival, and thus my life has been blessed.

My eyes have seen and my ears have heard

It was my part in the feast to play upon my instrument and I have done all I could

Now I ask, has the time come at last when I may go in and see Thy face and offer Thee my silent salutation ?"

Here is the gospel of life. Our life should be so tuned that we are to carry on our work, to do our duty in the best way that we can, for a part, best suited to our capacity, has been allotted to each of us in His great festival and we are to do it with joy and in the urge of divinity, in one deep salutation to him.

Sarat Chandra Chatterjee

Sarat Chandra is a novelist of great power and originality With deep and clear insight into the workings of the human heart, he has given us a galaxy of characters, who seem more real to us than men actually living Lacking in the romantic flavour and rich poetic idealism of Bankimchandra and Rabindranath, he transcends them in sober actuality. A wide acquaintance with human life and human passions gives him that incomparable ease and fluency which is a source of delight to all his readers. There never has been a shrewder observer of human nature. He records those ideas and impressions only which he has actually thought and felt. We may speak of him what Professer Raleigh has said of Shakespeare: "There is no thrill of feeling communicated from the printed page but has been first alive in the mind of the author. There was nothing alive in his mind that was not intensely and sincerely felt." He has followed to the letter the advice Kiranmayi gave to Dibakar in that masterpiece of him, 'Charitrahin'. Sarat Chandra is no lover of twilight. No moonlight tinge colours the atmosphere in which he moves. There is no mystery, no magic that envelopes his action His characters look bright and vivid in the clear sunlight of his imagination. He is a stern realist and gives us a faithful picture of contemporary life and manners.

The note of intimacy is rare in him. The dramatic element is predominant. Concrete in his presentation, he places

before us a large number of men and women and sets them working. There is no background of nature. He has no wish to be claimed as a 'Prose Wordsworth.' His concern is with men in all their follies and foibles, in all their joys and sorrows. He loves to probe deeper into the springs of human actions and motives. His intellectual gifts, splendid as they are, love to analyse the heart and illuminate the secret corners of human soul. He is with Meredith and George Eliot in his psychological bent and he is perhaps influenced by the psychological novels of the modern age. George Eliot lays the whole stress on character, but in Sarat Chandra there is a delicate combination of character and incident. His manipulation of events and characters is so nice and startling that once we take up the book, we cannot but finish it; nevertheless, there is no cheap sensationalism in him Content to draw his materials from men and women with whom he has come in actual contact, he excels in picturing his age He has not essayed to build in fancy any bygone age. Bengali novels were mainly historical in the first stage of their development. Bankimchandra and Rameshchandra were inheritors of the tradition of Scott and were radiant luminaries in the realm of historical romances. This romantic element is extinct for the present, and there is no likelihood that it will come into vogue in near future. Therefore it is not strange that Sarat Chandra confined himself to social and realistic novels only. It is moreover due to his intellectuality and wit, the practical turn of his mind, and the indignant note of his expressions. He lacks that imaginative sensibibility and love for the antique which makes up a writer of Romance.

Sarat Chandra is a satiric observer. He has not the geniality of Dickens nor is his work, pungent with the cynicism of Thackeray. He is a bitter critic of life. With the subtlety of his artistic delineation, he lashes all sorts of insincerities of

life, all shams and pretences, and the vices and wrongs of the present generation. A reformer at heart, he never preaches his theories. He feels keenly the *wickedness and the inhumanity* that seem rampant in our social life and social relations, and his sensitive soul is clouded by a tragedy for the moment; but he never loses hope in mankind. He has firm belief in the essential goodness of things and knows that everything will be set right in its own time.

There is a note of revolt in him, and he has this much in common with Bernard Shaw that both are destructive forces, both are intellectual irritants in the field of letters. They have opened the eyes of the public to matters of deep interest and consequently to the hidden cankers of our life and society. Sarat Chandra has revolted against the accepted convention of woman's place in society. To him chastity is not the only thing that makes a perfect woman To attain perfection, she must have developed her faculties to their fullest extent. There are infinite possibilities in which a woman can fulfil the end of her life

He has shown us the God element in women who are despised by the genteel society. In Savitri and Rajlakshmi *he has clearly manifested the great and good things these* neglected women are capable of doing. Though they went out of the threshold of society, their destinies are not doomed. If they are given an opportunity, they are able to do immense good to society. This breadth of sanity of outlook has enabled him to illumine the darkest regions which lie hidden because of the hypocrisy and harshness of society.

Though himself not sentimental, the keynote of all his characters is sentimentality. Sentimentality is a social trait with us. His characters are more or less impassionate. It is often difficult to find out any rhyme or reason for their

actions. His portraiture is very effective, whenever he is to deal with eccentric persons. Bindu, Sreekanta. Birajbou, and Satish make themselves beloved to us by their waywardness and eccentricity. The searchlight of the author's penetrating art irradiates all their oddities and whims and make them immortal friends of his readers.

Reticent and reserved in nature, Sarat Chandra never takes his readers into his confidence. There is a note of aloofness in him, so that we do not find in him that charm of pathos that is a distinctive characteristic with Dickens or with Jaladhar Sen in our own literature. In "*Grihadaha*" the fate of Achala is sad enough, but the author had no tears for her. There is no attempt on the part of the author to draw sympathy and mercy for this helpless girl. He presents the complex tragedy with the calm serenity of a dispasionate judge.

A stern critic of life and a shrewd observer, he notes the trivialities of our life, the little worries, the little woes and the little joys of our everyday life and adjusts them to build up amusing stories and novels. But he never laughs with them, or sheds tears for them. Variety and wit he has, but he has not that milk of human kindness which makes the writer one with his hero, except in Sreekanta, which is the David Copperfield of Sarat Chandra, where he is said to have given reminiscences of his own life and there is some approach to self-expression.

Sarat Chandra is far more successful with women than with men. Though not a devotee in the shrine of feminine grace and charm, he has given us women in the elusive elements of womanhood, with a delicacy of touch all his own. The women characters such as Bijoya, Achala, Sabitri are

so deftly drawn that they can be compared with the women of Shakespeare. Portia, Viola, Julia will find no shame to call them their own kith and kin. These portraits mark the rich fertility and profundity of his genius.

As a stylist, he is simple and clear. The subtle and complex characters are presented to us with such clarity and lucidity that one is struck with wonder. He records the minutest fluctuations of emotional experience, with an ease and eloquence that always appeals to the heart. There is no straining after rich technique. There is nowhere any over-emphasis.

Sarat Chandra is still living and the rich vitality of his genius may yet give us products that may belie all our predictions But we think the vigour of his creative power has spent its force. He may go on giving us old things in new forms and garbs, but he will not perhaps open any more new avenues of light. But what he has given us, is sterling gold, and Bengal will ever remain grateful to him for the rich feast in which he has invited all who can read their mother-tongue. Sarat Chandra is too near for us to form any rational and unbiased estimate of his art and genius. But future generations may adore him as one of the best artists of our mother-tongue, who has said fine things about humanity more than any litterateur of his age. Next to the many-sided and heaven-born genius of Rabindranath, the world-poet, his is the greatest intellectual fecundity. A perusal of his works, if not of all, but at least of the more well-known ones, will convince any one of his elusive genius and excellent art. There can be no gainsaying the fact that he will always loom a large and important figure in the world of fiction.

Netaji Subhas

Netaji Subhash! thou shouldst be living at this hour, India has need of thee.

India is free to-day We, however, need a man like Subhash who can build the future on solid foundations. Mahatma Gandhi gave us the creed of non-violence and satyagraha and won freedom for us. But with all glory to Mahatma, we must not and we should not forget, the grand achievements of Subhash, which, judged from the view-point of practical realities did more for our liberation than any other political move on the part of India.

The astounding boldness of his revolutionary plans in East Asia is the wonder of wonders. To a disarmed people, who have not handled arms for two hundred years, he brought the intrepid zeal of a revolutionary and with the magic of his personality and faith, he inspired all around him, so that clerks gave up their pens for swords and girls came out of their seclusion to fight for Indian freedom.

He solved the problem of communalism, the no less bewildering question of food and language, raised an army, formed a national Government and fought heart and soul for the salvation of India. Those who could not understand the technique of Ahimsa and Satyagraha were moved by the power of rifles and machine guns and changed their

minds and this is the real force behind the transfer of power by the British rulers.

He was born on Saturday, the 23rd January, 1897, Brought up in a large family, he became sociable and a man beloved to everybody. But was contemplative from the very early years and remained, as he says himself, an introvert all his life.

In his school-days he came under the influence of the works of Vivekananda and from his fiery teachings he imbibed his great love for his motherland and the creed of social service He derived his mystic outlook and creed of renunciation from the sayings of Ramkrishna. In his auto-biography, he did not give much value to the craze for purity and self-continence but he himself led a life of celibacy and had some sort of divine illumination. The reception of this spiritual light made a dynamic change in his life. It was the death of the lower man, the natural man in him and the regeneration and birth of the true self, which finds in surrender and service the promise of the highest freedom and glory.

After graduating from the Scottish Church College, he went to England He stood fourth in the I. C. S. examination but he was determined to pay the price of freedom, the price, as he says, consists of sacrifice and suffering, without selling himself for a mess of pottage. This was in 1921.

Since then, he took an active part in the Indian struggle for freedom, first as a trusted lieutenant of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan and then in his own leadership. He was twice elected President of the Indian Congress. His re-election at Tripuri was made after a memorable fight with the

Congress High Command. He had to resign because of internal pressure and soon after he organised the Forward Block. He had to be behind the prison-bars for several years between 1921 and 1941. On January 26, 1941, he was found missing from his Elgin Road home, where he was in internment.

The brief space of five years from 1941 to 1945 saw the crowning glory of his life After a miraculous escape from India, he joined the Axis forces. He was honoured by Mussolini and Hitler. Formed an Indian National Army and fought the great war of independence. He failed but his failure is greater than success.

Whether he is dead or not is still a mystery. If he is alive he is sure to come and glorify India but if he is actually dead, he is deathless in his glory and will remain for ever the symbol of youth and adventure and the embodiment of freedom like King Arthur and will inspire generations after generations.

The most striking feature of his great life is the great mystic outlook which sought the freedom, ease and splendour of transcendence in the turmoil of political and social activities. He had an abiding faith in oneness of humanity and his staunch fight for Indian freedom was to build a richer and a newer world. The sweet ideal of world-fellowship finds beautiful expression in the following extract of his speech. "O what a wonderful vision of the greatest ideal of one God and one humanity, one culture, one vision and one citizenship. In this great comity of Nations, all other countries will be like different provinces, subordinated to a world-government, with a world ideal, which alone can save mankind from mutual slaughter and self-destructive political and revolutionary upheavals. God grant us wisdom to understand and live up to this great world-ideal."

This dreamy vision was based on his conception of reality. He says :—Reality is spirit, the essence of which is love, gradually unfolding itself in an eternal play of conflicting forces and their solutions. To him this world was not an illusion. He loved this world with all its joys and sorrows. He wrote in his book—'An Indian Pilgrim'—Reality has an objective existence and not an illusion. This reality is not static but dynamic, it is ever changing towards a better state of existence. This reality is for me spirit working with a conscious purpose through space and time.

This faith gave him that magnetic charm which made him the beloved leader of Ajad Hind Fouz He is no match for Mahatma Gandhi, whose spiritual insight is unparalled in the history of the world, but next to him his towering personality soars higher above the rest of the fighters for freedom. Shahnawaz Khan writes about him—"From the moment I came into personal contact with him, he exercised a strange influence over me. Even now, I do not know in what proportion the man, the soldier and the statesman in him were blended. At home the man in him seemed to dominate, at the front and in the midst of his troops, the soldier in him shone in splendid glory, and in the councils and conferences and at his desk, as Head of the State of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, his brilliant statesmanship made a profound impression on one and all of us."

This is very high praise from a man who was brought up in the strict discipline of British Military atmosphere. One can also write pages to illustrate his dynamic enthusiasm, his wonderful power of command, his fore-sight and political sagacity, the outcome of his astute knowledge of the international politics and a very clear grasp of men and things. But we would rather concentrate our attention

on his great ideals which we need to build the India of his dream. Subhas was a nationalist to the core of his heart. In his Tokyo speech, he said : "I am a nationalist myself who will give the last drop of his blood for the preservation of national honour and self-respect" This nationlism was based on his faith that India has a mission in this world, that her great tradition was one of synthesis. He was proud of Indian thought and culture, which from the very beginning was universal in its outlook. He therefore wanted to build up a new and modern nation on the basis of our old culture and civilization, but his efforts would not be merely to fulfil a selfish national purpose but to make humanity great so that the world may ultimately become a better and happier place to dwell in.

On this back ground of spiritual wealth, love and splendour on this ideal of universal prosperity and happiness he wanted to establish a socialist society, which would be noted for all-round freedom. He says :- By freedom, I mean all round freedom i. e. freedom for the rich as well as for the poor, freedom for all individuals and all classes. This freedom implies not only emancipation from political bondage but also equal distribution of wealth, abolition of caste-barriers and social inequities and destruction of communalism and religious intolerance. This, as an ideal may appear utopian to hard-headed men and women, but this ideal at once can appease the hunger of the soul."

We are yet to arrive at this goal when each individual in our body-politic gets full and free opportunity for self-expansion and for self-expression. His creed was one of socialism. He says :- "India should evolve her own form of socialism as well her own methods. I have no doubt in

my mind that salvation of India as of the world, depends on socialism."

Man is not a mere spectator of the world process. He is an active agent who by his sacrifice and suffering, moulds the world nearer to his ideals. We must therefore strive hard and work hard to follow in the footsteps of that great liberator of India, whose name should go to history along with Shivaji, Washington, Garibaldi, Kamal Ataturk and many others.

It is a pity that we do not honour him as we should. We become great by honouring the great. Let us adore our great Netaji, the man of sterling virtues, the worshipper of noble principles In one of his letters, he wrote- "In this mortal world, everything perishes except principles. These principles can live only when individuals do not hesitate to die for them When individuals perish for a sacred principle, that principle does not die, but incarnates in other individuals."

Let us gird up our loins to die for the great principles for which he stood. His faith and philosophy, his fervent patriotism and splendid sacrifice are not in vain. The immortal hero of the war of Indian Independence will have homage and reverence from men of all climates now and for ever. It is for us to see whether we can glorify our little souls by the motto of his greatness, by the radiance of his service and suffering.

Mahendranath — A study

Mahendra Nath, the Saint is dead and the whole country mourns his loss. There are many, now living, who may be superior to him in learning and culture and many such would be born in future. But it would be difficult to find one like him, who did not merely pursue knowledge for his own sake, but lived the philosophy he taught.

The Upanishad has a beatiful passage which runs thus :—

Brahma-Nishtho grihasthah syat
Tattvajnana-Parayanah.
Yad Yat Karma Prakurvita.
Tad Brahmani Samarpayet.

One can say without any exaggeration that Mahendra Nath was such a householder, whose life was thoroughly permeated with Brahma. All his life he pursued the deeper truth of all things and in all his activities he dedicated his works to the eternal being. He was the perfect embodiment of Indian Culture and from seeing him and knowing him, we can say surely that what India has taught through her long centuries of Sadhana is not peace which is in negation, but that which is goodness, which is in the truth of perfect union. He was the true Niskam Karma Yogi, which ideal has been so beautifully preached in the divine song in the battle field of Kurukshetra. He knew how to perform all his

activities in the presence of the eternal, with the pure knowledge of the spiritual meaning of existence.

He was born on the 25th. May, 1885 at Lohagora, a rich and prosperous village in the District of Jessore, now in Eastern Pakistan. He lost his father while he was a child of three years and her loving mother brought her up with great care and caution. He imbibed his deep religious tendencies from her and it was she, who guided his early foot-steps in the path of knowledge. He was at first admitted into the Victoria Collegiate School at Narail, but on account of fevers, he left Narail and joined the Sanmilani School of Jessore. But here too he was a pray to Malaria and as such he went to Barisal. In Barisal, he was a student of Broja Mohan H. E. School and here the famous teacher Kailash Pandit made deep impressions upon his growing soul and he tried to follow the great moral ideals of that famous School But Barisal too did not suit his health and he was sent to Deoghar. Here in the open fields, he found that great joy which is in nature and he daily used to read the poems of Wordsworth, the works of Rabindranath and his father and these writings moulded his life and character. He passed the Entrance Examination in 1903 and joined the General assembly's Institution in Calcutta Here while following the lectures of Mr. Bruce and Wordsworth, he felt something of the romantic feelings of that great poet, and he felt that the big palm trees in the courtyard of his institutions were not dead things but they were animate living things. His feeling was too deep to allow him to walk over the grasses of the lawn. When his mind was thus moved by nature, he tried to get into touch with religious teachers and with Swami Saradananda of the Ramkrishna Mission, he went to the mother Sarada Devi The mother gave a beautiful lotus to him and told him—"you are very beautiful. Let

your heart blossom like the petals of this beautiful flower." This blessing of the great mother had been fruitful in his life. After passing the F. A. in 1905, he joined the Presidency College and here he came into touch with that great Professor, Benoyendra Nath Sen. He also came into touch with another noble man, namely, Nagendra Nath Bhaduri and in the company of this man, his spiritual life blossomed with fragrance. After finishing his educational career, he joined the Sanskrit College as Lecturer in English. Here he came into close contact with great Sanskrit teachers, namely, Mahamohopadhaya Prananath Tarkaratna, Luxman Shastri, Pandit Thakurdas Sarma and others and he studied Vedanta. After studying the Vedanta Philosophy in their original source, he submitted a thesis on the comparative studies in Vedanta and obtained the Ph. D. degree of the Calcutta University in 1920. In 1930, he was transferred to the Presidency College and while acting as Professor there, he delivered the convocation address at Gurukul and in 1929 he was the sectional chairman on Hindu Philosophy in the Philosophical Congress held at Dacca. Soon after this, he went to Nabadwip and there one day he felt that a bright presence had manifested itself before him And this presence asked him "my Child, my Child, follow me." He answered "materialise yourself on the physical plane and I shall certainly follow you Otherwise it is not possible for me to follow you" At that the presence illumined Mahendra Nath and he felt that the mysteries of the unknown world all at once expressed themselves before him. This unique and mysterious feeling continued for several years, and soon after this miraculous insight, he began to write his book on the Hindu mysticism. This book spread his name and fame all over the world and he was invited by Italy to deliver lectures on Hindu Religion and philosophy. His lectures in Italy and

other places were later on published as 'Eastern Lights' and this book was very favourably received by the reading public.

From Italy, he went to England, stopping for a short time in Paris. In Europe, he came in touch with the leading philosophers and the great intellectual giants and every one of them was thoroughly impressed by his deep learning, by his personal spiritual insight and by his loving character. He also met Romain Rolland and had a very beautiful interview with him. After his return from Europe, he went to Pandicheri and he was very much fascinated with the spiritual life led by the Asramites at Pandicheri. He also learnt all about the integral Yoga preached by Sri Arabinda. After his return from Pandicheri, he was invited to join the world conference of faiths and in May, 1936 he again sailed for England. This travel was fruitful in many ways and he enjoyed his trip very much coming into contact with the leading personalities of Europe, many of whom are really more spiritual than the average Indian. After his retirement in 1950, many of his admirers and pupils celebrated his 65th. birth-day and arranged a memorial meeting, which was presided over by Dr. Sarvapalli Radha Krishnan and it was attended by many distinguished Professors and Cultural leaders from India and abroad. This Jayanti function was a great success. It had published three books—one on Indian Culture in English, one in Bengali and the third, a life on the teachings of Dr. Sarkar.

It is not a fit occasion to appraise the contributions of Mahendra Nath in the domain of philosophy and religion. Time will alone evaluate them and will preserve what is worth preserving, but we say that his life was a dedicated life to truth, goodness and beauty. The Upanishad ideals

were not mere imaginaries. With him, they were virtual realities. According to him, man's pursuit after Ananda is the highest goal of his life and he taught that if mankind tries 'to realise the great wave of Ananda which comes out of everything in the universe then by proper habits and diligent exercise we shall be able to enjoy joy and bliss in the highest category. He too was the lover of beauty According to him, beauty and bliss are the ultimate realities on earth and as we pursued our ideals by diligence and by perseverance we climb up the stages and come face to face with the embodiment of the real Ananda.

This is a very short account of the great teacher. He is much superior in his esteemed writings. In personal life his heart was as sweet as his body was extremely beautiful. Even after his death, there was such a halo of glory round about his face that the onlookers could not but feel presence of something deeply interfused with his noble soul. His life is sublime and inspiring and will serve as an infallible guide to all seekers after truth in the realisation of the ultimate end of human existence. Mahendra Nath as a philosopher may live or may die, but Mahendra Nath the great devotee shall live for ever. Along with his many disciples and admirers, we also say, "Oh ! great Soul ! may your departed Atma live in joy and harmony with Over Soul."

Is the American Indian an Indian Emigrant ?

Before the advent of the greedy Europeans to the Western hemisphere, America, both North and south, had numerous civilized peoples. The Europeans took their continents, destroyed their ancient heritage and almost exterminated a noble race of people. It is the tragedy of Imperialism.

Now that most of the original inhabitants of America are dead and gone, scholars and anthropologists have studied with care the old civilizations of the New World. This study has disclosed the existence of four outstanding cultures, namely, the Pueblo culture in the south-west, the Aztec in the valleys and highlands of Mexico, the Maya in Yucatan peninsula of Mexico and the Inca of Peru, cultures which stand comparison with those found in Egypt, Mesopotamia and Indus Valley.

It is generally agreed among the scholars that Asia is the original home of the American Indians, though there is no agreement as to whence they actually came.

It is conjectured on the evidences so far collected that these people crossed over about 25,000 years back. Nobody is definite how this immigration took place. The most

common view is that the stream of migrants passed over by way of Berring Strait. It is not also very wild to imagine that the intrepid sailors who went to colonise the Pacific Islands, sailed in calm winter across the great Pacific Ocean and directly reached Mexico or Peru. But the actual route taken is not of so much importance, as the original home from which they actually departed.

Colonised by Hindus

In his startling book "Hindu America" Dewan Chamanlal, a famous journalist of India. took up the thesis that America was colonised by the Hindus long before the arrival of Columbus Unfortunately this has not attracted our attention to that extent which, such a conclusion, would have taken the fancy of a free race.

Now that we are free, it behoves our national pride to take up the matter in right earnest and to investigate the matter to its very core. If the view is correct, it will infuse a new glory and a bold spirit of enterprise into our dull national life When we shall realise that men from our own country went forth and after suffering great hardships colonised distant unknown countries, their remarkable achievements in exploration and conquest would be perennial sources of inspiration and guidance to all the youths of the countries.

Now if you ask for scientific proof of the fact that the Hindus actually discovered America and established empire there, you cannot have it, because of the Spanish Colonial policy. The Spaniards subjected the Indians to slavery, pillaged them of their wealth, ruthlessly destroyed all vestige of their ancient cultures. So one can only place

facts that still remain—customs and rituals—which still exist, and from these one can venture an inference only.

People in Bengal know the famous story of Lakshman Sen, the last independent ruler of Bengal, how he did not withstand the Moslem invasion because of a prophecy. We have a similar situation in Mexico. Montezuma, who was king of the Aztecs, when Cortes went to conquer, had thousands of warriors while Cortes had a mere handful. But there was an ancient legend that strange, white-skinned gods would one day come and take possession of the land of the Aztecs. This superstition hastened the ruin of the vast Aztec empire

Sun Worshipers

This similarity in national trait is no proof but still it is something. Then come to the names—the Aztecs remind you of the sage Astic who saved the race having serpent for its totem. Are the Aztecs the heroes of the grateful race who left India because of persecution by the Kuru Kings? No answer is forthcoming, but you must not forget the association. These Aztecs founded a lake settlement called Tenochtitlan on the site of the present Mexico city. They, like the Mayas are devoted sun worshippers and it is said that their great state might be called a democratic theocracy because of their fanatic religious zeal. Now worship of the sun as the embodiment of god is to be found in Egypt and India. There are some who hold that neither the Egyptians nor the Aztecs and the Mayas had any contact with one another at any time in the past and that each race developed all the items, ideas and practices of its own culture independently. But the traits are so similar that this theory of parallel cutural development seems not to be true. Montezuma, Emperor of Mexico told the

Spaniards that his ancestors came from the Far East, across great waters and they were white people. This native tradition is against the Egyptian origin. Then again scholars have established that India is the source from which the culture of Egypt and Greece originated. So it is beyond all doubt that the culture of the Aztecs and the Mayas is the product of early Hindu colonization.

There are many other factors which also go to establish that the American Indians are really Indians. Dewan Chamanlal has collected these data in his "Hindu America" from various recognised authors and I select the following from his capturing book. But before I pass on to them, I shall like to tell something about the description of the *patala* in the Puranas. If one reads the description of the same, one will see that it is a narration of actual things and not of imaginary lands The writers of the Puranas divide the *patala* region into seven parts and two of the names Maya and Bali occur in the case of the Mayas and Bolivia.

Professor Raman Mena, Curator of thhe National Museum of Mexico says that the Maya human types are like those of India The irreproachable technique of their reliefs, the sumptuous headdress and ostentatious outlook, the system of construction, all speak of India and the Orient.

In the Mexican Government publication, it is written that those who arrived first in the continent, later to be known as America, were groups of men, driven by that mighty current that set out from India towards the East.

Mexican Hymn

There is a Mexican hymn which supports the conclusion. Here is the hymn :—

Over the water in ships came numerous tribes.

To the coast they came, to the coast situated on the north
And wherewith ships they landed.
That was called Panutla ("when they govern the water")
That is now called Panutla.
Then they followed the coast.
They beheld the mountains, specially the Sierra Nevada
and Volcan (Popocatepati)
And came still following the coast, to Guatemala
Thereafter they came and reached.
The place called Tamonchan ("we seek our home")
And there they tarried long.

There is a distinct resemblance between the words *patala* and Panutla. Then about the gods worshipped by these people, it is said that "when the spaniards arrived in Yucatan they found an immense number of gods being worshipped. Essentially the great god was the rain god 'Chac' the migrated and transformed Ganesh of the Hindu systems, with him marched Indra as maize god and around and upon these two dieties arose a vast number of minor divinities earth gods, rainbow goddesses and what not. It is possible that into its cultured ferment came not only great driftages of ideas and beliefs from orthodox Hinduism and Brahmanism, but from Buddhism as well."

Swinging Penance

Then the swinging ceremony, annually performed in our country during the Charak Puja has a parallel in the swinging penance performed in Dakota, U. S. A. Hewitt is of opinion that these bold adventurers went to America, some through China and Japan, while others by direct voyages. India is the original home of cotton. It is very likely that the Indian immigrants to America took with

them the cotton plant from their native homes. The worship of the snake in India and Mexico is one of the important links between the Indians, Mayas and Aztecs. The *patala* region is associated in the Hindu tradition with the Nagas. The walls enclosing the Great Temple of Mexico were covered with sculptured serpents and scholars have proved the existence of the Vrita and Ahi legend in America.

The accurate representation of the Indian elephant's profile, its trunk, tusk, and lower lip, the form of its ear together with the distinctive Hindu artistic feeling on sculptured pillars in the ruins of Maya civilization is an unmistakable proof of the connection between India and the original inhabitants of pre-Columbus America

Mackenzie writes that the doctrine of the world's ages was imported into pre-Columbian America. The duration of the first age is the same in Mexico and India—namely 4,800 years.

The Sacred Fire

The ancient Mexican mode of producing the sacred fire appears to be the prototype of the Vedic ceremonial The ancient American used to cremate the dead The North American Indians still perform the ceremony of Soma sacrifice· The American Indians had maidens of God, just like our Devadasis, who used to serve in the temples. The most important duty performed by them was to guard the sacred fires so that they were never extinguished and to make a daily food offering to the gods. The Peru Indians still perform the Ram-Sita Utsav. The Mexican Indians still stage the fight between the armies of Rama and Ravana. Like India no kitchen in Indian homes in America is com-

plete without *Sil-Batta*, which is used for grinding corn and making chutneys. They chew the coco-leaves with lime just as we do with betel-leaves The Hindu chapati or roti is eaten in every Indian home in Mexico and other adjoining states. Pepper is frequently used. Almost all our vegetables and fruits are available in Mexico and some of them have names similar to those in India.

There use of flowers is common in all rituals. They hang garlands and wreaths round the necks of gods just as we do. Like our Yogis, there were American priests, who suffered rigours and penances of the most severe types to appease gods and to have communion with them.

The American Indians were a highly moral people. They practised monogamy as a rule. They were great architects who erected huge stone structures as temples and forts. The immense irrigation system is a glorious achievement

Free India must now reclaim to its embracing clasp the long forgotten brothers of America. We must establish cultural relationship with these brave people who have retained in spite of inhuman persecutions their bonds with their mother countries.

Cultural ambassadors should start forth immediately in Mexico, Peru, Bolivia and Guatemala where they still cherish our faith and culture The call comes from beyond the far-off seas and it is a call of friendship, love and good-will. Will not young India respond ? Will not our ambitious and valiant young men follow in the footsteps of their fear-less fore-fathers ? Mother India sits serenely with her loving smile and waits to see.

The Father of Indian Independence*

Mahatma Gandhi is the finest flower of Indian spiritual life and with the great names of that land of mystery and strangeness, Krishna, Buddha, Mahavira, Chaitanya, Ramkrishna and Aurobinda, he will go down to history as a perennial source of inspiration and guidance.

But one should ask whether his influence is to blossom forth in renewed vigour and effulgence for the creation of a new world of love and joy.

Now on this solemn day, his birthday, I can assure my kind listeners that the more we know of him and his teachings, the better it is for the whole world.

Those of us who are dreamers, who are thinking of a world-Government and of friendliness and fellowship between the nations of the world should today ponder over his advice as to the right way of action for all good objects.

"The right action contains its own propaganda and needs no other. It's the same with all these movements, societies or sects, they waste their time and energies saying what everybody ought to do, but if they themselves were

* A lecture delivered by Dr. Das in Sanfrancisco.

to act up to their own principles, that would be sufficient and arresting propaganda. Truth needs no publicity other than itself and like a stone thrown into a pond, its ripples will in time inevitably reach the circumference"

We should try to realise the meaning and significance of this solemn utterance and then try to live up to our ideals in life, for it is easy to talk but hard to practise. Gandhi brought a new force to political life, the force of truth and ahimsa or non-violence. He thus spiritualised politics and showed the world by the achievement of Indian Independence, how soul-force is greater than the force of the arms.

He walked as he himself said in his letter to Tagore in the footsteps of Christ and Buddha and Christ-like he died the death of a martyr from the hand of one Hindu, for whom he lived all his life.

Mahatma Gandhi was a Hindu to the core of his heart. He has written himself—"I can no more describe my feeling for Hinduism than for my own wife. She moves me as no other woman in the world can. Not that she has no faults, I dare say, she has many more than I see myself. But the feeling of an indissoluble bond is there. Even so I feel for and about Hinduism with all its faults and limitations."

Therefore it behoves all who come to worship his great life that they should try to live up to the great ideals of Hinduism, for inspite of all he owed to Christianity, all he owed to Tolstoy, all he owed to Ruskin, he showed in his life and activities, the mighty thought-currents of Hinduism in their broadest and most universal aspects.

The world in this atomic age needs a new philosophy and this intellectual fare one should find in the sacred and solemn teachings of Hinduism.

Hatred cannot cease by hatred but we can conquer it only by the power of love. Under the apprehension of a third world-war, we must be brave and we must fight our way for that abiding world-peace which has been the aim and ideal of all true religious and cultured persons all over the globe.

And for this world-Government, we dreamers should bear in mind what Gandhi said about suffering. He wrote :—"Suffering cheerfully endured ceases to be suffering and is transmuted into an ineffable joy. The man who flies from suffering is the victim of endless tribulation before it has come to him and is half dead when it does come. But one who is cheerfully ready for anything and everything that comes, escapes all pain ; his cheerfulness acts as an anaesthetic."

With these words of hope, let us try to build the edifice of true and real Internationalism. Unless we be cosmopolitan, we perish. Civilization is the expression of the soul and it directs us to expand our hearts in no uncertain terms. We shall preach the gospel of love. We shall fight that one war, in which all men are allies, the war against hunger and ignorance. Let all the hungry in the globe and let all that are in darkness know that the nectar of love is food for everybody and that spiritual love is light for every man.

Let us accept therefore on this solemn birth-day of the new Messia of our age that the soul's upward urge requires the path of love and non-violence. Let us be true to our creed—let us not prepare ourselves for war by increase of

armaments, let us be hopeful and cheerful. We know that modern science and human ingenuity can make our planet, the home of happy millions by conquering hunger, by dispelling darkness and by preaching and living the life of love. Let all pessimism and doubt go, let us make new history by following the lead of Gandhi in his holy living, let us in our search for truth and greatness, depend once for all in the creative power of the soul.

The Language problem in India

A language is the most powerful implement that shapes the destiny of humankind using it. Living in this age of machine, we know how the irons and the steels have directed and ruled the modern world more powerfully than any human emperor or dictator could have done. Language involves social consequences of greater import and significance. It does things to man just as a metal or a machine does things to him. It opens new life-force and brings new vitality, but at the same time, it may bring decadence and disease.

This must be borne in mind by all lovers of India in solving the knotty language problems of India. What language we habitually speak depends upon a geographic accident. Therefore there is no inherent difficulty in learning a new language. This is a factor, which is forgotton by many, while sincerely trying to solve this problem

Our political leaders have decided that Hindi should be our state language and because of this decision, there is already a slowing down of our desire to master the English language precisely and correctly.

The above decision is a political one and may be revised. I wish to place before all lovers of culture that if we adopt Hindi as our national language, we are doomed to be insular and backward in the march of human civilization.

If Hindi is retained as the state-language, each student shall have to learn four languages—his mother tongue, Hindi, Sanskrit and English. We cannot dispense with the Sanskrit as it is the fountain source of all that is best and grandest in our national culture. We can not give up English as it is the best means for our international communication.

Moreover the retention of Hindi gives to those whose mother-tongue is Hindi an undesirable preference over those who speak a different language. To be fair and impartial, we can therefore use either Sanskrit or English as our state language. As a language, Sanskrit has values much superior to most of the world-languages, but unfortunately it is a dead language The best thing, therefore, would be for us to adopt the English language, which is already known to people all over India.

If English remains our state language, none in India gets any advantageous position over any other and a student may finish his studies by learning there languages, his mother-tongue, Sanskrit and English.

Modern technology is an international culture which ministers to the common needs of human beings. We must have science and technology in order to have prosperity and progress. English will be necessary for this purpose

But the English language has many other advantages. It is in a sense world-language One who knows English may travel all over the globe and may communicate with the different tribes and races to a limited extent. The treasure house of the world's literature is open to one who knows English.

The world is now becoming nearer and nearer through the great achievements of science. Human collaboration on a Planetary scale for bringing health, leisure and plenty for all is the human ideal to-day and the united Nation's organization is daily helping the development of this international amity and fellowship. We can take effective parts in the federation of nations only through a language which is understood by the greatest number of people of the world.

As far as one can see into the future, there is no likelihood of there being one language for all of us in India There will always be a *multiplicity of regional languages* for everyday use we must therefore have a second language as a common medium for communion and correspondence. I assert with all the emphasis that I can command that it would be a retrograde move, if we accept Hindi to be this second language. The language-groups in the south have no affinity with Hindi and they will find it very difficult to have proficiency in the same. It would be a sheer waste of human energy to devote time and money for acquiring mastery in Hindi, because it is not rich and cannot satisfy the needs of modern life

The easiest and safest way is to retain the English language which has inspired us all these years and which has been the cementive force of our national unity One cannot and should not forget that the English language opened our outlook on life, gave us breadth of vision and inspired our national aspirations for freedom

But we need not dwell on the past services of the English language. Let us look to the future. International Co-operation is the order of the day. The world-planning for a better and richer humanity will bring about incessant contact betw-

een medical officers, food-experts, engineers and planning experts. They are not likely to benefit by these social contacts unless through a language which is global. The new potential of prosperity for all will therefore be our guiding star in selecting English as our state language.

The adoption of a foreign language may hurt the national pride of many but this attitude is undesirable if we desire to build up a world without class, war and want. Once we give up our narrow outlook, the adoption of English will become easy. It will be an efficient means of international communication, embracing both the simple needs of everyday life and the more exacting ones of technical discussion.

If along with the adoption of English, we have the courage to take also the Roman Alphabet for writing our own langnages, there would be much more simplification. It would enable many to understand sister languages and may also inspire one to know the language and literature of his neighbours. To give a concrete example, if Oriya be written in same script as Bengali, both can be easily understood by the inhabitants both of Bengal and Orissa.

There have been many attempts to build up an international language such as the Basic English, Esperanto and others, but those have not been successful. It would be profitable therefore to adopt a language which by itself has become and tends to become the world language.

The subject is not a mere matter of emotional importance. It is of graver rational and international consequences and therefore deserves the closer attention of all who want to see India occupying its rightful place in the commonwealth of nations. Progress and development should be our ideals and

for them, we shall rise above all pettiness and narrowness of outlook.

Those who uphold the spiritual culture of India need not worry, for our impact with the English Language gave us our renaissance and enabled us to cling closer to our national heritage. It is true no doubt that India can best develop herself and serve humanity by being herself and following the law of her own nature.

But this ideal would be best served by our association with the English Language and literature. True spirituality rejects no new light, no added means or materials of our human self-development We shall be able to assimilate all that is best in the culture of the West through English. By the blending of the scientific outlook of the West with the spiritual bend of our own culture we shall rise to the height of our national glory and renaissance.

The world is eager to have our integral vision, to have our spiritual light. We can import the same best through a language which is world-wide.

Thus from whatever consideration, the matter is looked into, whether political or economic, whether cultural or spiritual, we would lose nothing, but on the otherhand, we would gain much

A new world shall be born and there are serious efforts in different countries for its advent. An era of peace, freedom and perfection is ahead. Should we fail in contributing our quota towards the descent of this new harmony and unity ?

To sum up, it would be a serious blunder to burden our future peoples with the task of mastering four languages. We should not take a step which in the longer run should divide

India into two parts, the northern India and the southern India speaking two different language groups. We must check the growth of provincialism, by developing the consciousness of Indian unity, for this, a common medium of expression is necessary. Let us maintain the status quo, by retaining English, for it will broaden our outlook, make us internationally minded and keep us in touch with the forces and movements of the world. I therefore strongly recommend that our constitution should be revised and the English language should be adopted as our national language.

The Administrative Problem in India

We are on the threshold of a new age in India. We want to regenerate our people from its life of sloth and idleness, which centuries of foreign domination have brought in India There are multifarious plans for an all round improvement, but ideal is one and execution is another.

To put into practice, to realise in action our ideals, we need a strong body of administrative personnel who are to carry out the objectives into reality. But to be frank and honest and to speak the truth, there is deterioration and degeneration in every sphere of public and private life. Inefficiency is writ large everywhere

Whatever other faults the British may have had, they built a bureaucracy, which did the most excellent work and at times the most brilliant. We had inherited this exquisite system but unfortunately for us, with the departure of the British office-heads, there is indiscipline, inefficiency and disorder If we go to the ordinary man and ask his honest opinion, he would unhesitatingly say that they were happier under the British rule. He would say that there was method, there was despatch and above all there was justice and fair play.

We cannot ignore this public feeling. There cannot but be truths behind this general complaint. We here murmur that our courts of justice no longer dispense justice with that impartial exactitude which was the glory of British justice. You get no reply to your letter before six months and unless you know the art of *tadbir*, you will expect no result however just and legitimate your claim might be. There is nepotism, favouritism and the door for honest and just business is closed for ever.

We love talking and we talk big of our great progress and boast of our achievements, but while self-adulation is running high, there is actual setback everywhere, whether we would admit it or not. If we wish really to build a socialistic pattern of society, where everyone will have plenty, leisure and health, we must have an administrative personnel who are honest and diligent, who are self-less and truthful, who are public servants in the truest sense of the term

As the Government is taking into hand more and more public utility matters, there is greater responsibility for better administration and this responsibility must continue to grow more and more in the years ahead.

But ever since the attainment of our national freedom, we are growing less and less dutiful. Just visit a Government office any day and you will find that there are more men in every department, but there is less work everywhere There is a daily clamour for higher wages and greater privileges, but none are eager to serve the mother country with greater zeal

The real remedy in this sorrowful state of things lies in the building of national character. Without men of character, all our plans will be merely building castles in the air.

Hardly any attention is given to this aspect of this question. There should be efforts in homes and schools for development of our moral character, for the growth of responsible citizenship and for united action and discipline.

One sure way of doing this is to introduce military training in our schools and colleges Military training inculcates discipline in a way which is never forgotten in life. It will also teach co-operation, hardihood, obedience and concerted work But this is not enough Man is the creature of his environments. It is our duty to change the present environments and create a new administrative pattern.

, India is now a federation of different autonomous states and the personnel that carry out the work of a particular state are men of that state But if we alter this pattern and put the I. A. S. men of different states in the service of a particular state, the administration would be much better. Take for example, the case of Bengal, if we fill the key posts and the higher services by men of Madras, Bombay, Uttar Pradesh and other provinces, these men will have no axe to grind here and they are sure to discharge their duties in an impartial way. They will have no embarassing situation to face, because of requests from friends and near relatives Coming from afar, they will try to live up to the highest ideals and thereby win the love and esteem of the people whom they will come to govern. They will try to be guides in the rough and tumble of action and honesty and integrity will be their spurs to action

It would be easier for them to safeguard themselves against the pitfalls of public life This change will be also of vital importance from another view-point. A feeling of national unity, a faith that we are Indians first of all, is yet to grow. If the administrative personnel are chosen from

men of the different provinces, there will be closer understanding and contact and this fellowship will develop the most desired-for national consciousness.

If certain change is necessary in our constitution to put this into practice, this can be easily done. History is the work of men. If we all have the desired end of a better and richer India, we shall have to do this.

If our moral values cannot keep pace with our material advance, there will be no progress. Unless we can harness the forces of production and technological achievements to the well-being of the people, there will surely be a political revolution. If we want a stable Government, a stable social system, there must be immediate steps for bettering and improving the administrative personnel. Only deeper and deeper misery will flow unless we can check the rotten state of our administration.

Ours is a new state. Mistakes, numerous mistakes of a serious nature are inevitable. But unless we are eager to rectify them, we are bound to be enveloped in tragedy We want a classless society. Times and again, this has been declared as our ideal. But if we wish to apply practice to theory and theory to practice, we must at once be wide awake to the necessity of having a body of men in all our public departments, who will not pose to be a superior class of beings, but who would work for the well-being of the masses in a spirit of service and humility. For ordinary men and women, an administration has value so far as it secures justice and fair play in the daily walks of life. Man values the future. Our aspirations centre round a nobler and a greater India in future. But the present builds the future. We must therefore be up and doing. Our aim is not mere survival but development In our struggle for social better-

ment we must not therefore tolerate inefficiency, inaptitude and insubordination in our workers, we must evolve an administrative code of ethical nature.

A tradition of upright and self-less service, a convention of straight-forward deal and skilful management is to be built up. But my own thesis is that the best way for it is to fashion an environment that gives them scope for the free growth of these ideals. It will be secured by choosing administrative personnel on an All India basis and not on provincial basis. It will burn up provincialism and will enable officers to adapt themselves to the new tempo of an All-India outlook.

A spotless bureaucracy arises from another factor which we have not taken into account in our discussion. This is that the wages of our national workers must suffice in food, shelter, clothing and the standard recreation and amusement But this is the goal of the socialist state, so that if we raise the technical level, educate people and instil them with a new faith and a new enthusiasm, we shall raise the standard of life in India. In a sense, all these efforts must be done simultaneously. Our national planning should therefore concern first with character-building and then with technological progress

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Our National Script

Our constitution is the work of our great patriots and is a work of monumental labour and deep deliberations. But still where reasons *demand otherwise, we should not* fail to change our constitution, for the progress of our country is the be all and end-all of all our national efforts. The official script is the Devnagri script

But I am of opinion that this decision is not a happy one. No one would challenge the view that there should be one script for all the different languages of India No amount of sentiment should be a bar to the adoption of a common script. The different languages of India are inter-related and if written in one script, they would be understood by many people and this would foster national consciousness and good-will between persons having different mother-tongues

The idea behind the move must be welcome to every Indian. But there is no special reason why Devnagri should be selected as this common script. We must approach the objective with an unbiased mind

Many wrongly believe that the Devnagri script is the script of Sanskrit all through the ages. This is not a historical fact. Sanskrit had been written in other scripts.

The Devnagri script cannot keep pace with this age of hurry and bustle. In this age of script movement, the cumbrous Devnagri-swift is out of the question.

The best script we can adopt is the Roman script. It is the script which is used by the major nations of the world, so that we shall become world-minded by accepting this script. World unity is no longer a poet's dream Whether we like it or not, we can not stand by. The world-forces are acting and reacting upon us. Adoption of the Roman script would be thus of distinct advantages over the Devnagri, in making our culture and commercial contacts with the outside world

We must in this connection bear in mind the other good points of the Roman script. The Roman alphabet contains only 26 letters and they can be joined together easily to facilitate continuous easy writing

The modern machines have been prepared to accomodate the Roman script, so that if we adopt this script, we shall get the full advantages of the type-writer, the linotype and the monotype. This would enable also large scale production by the lino-type and steno-type

Let us consider for a moment the pitiable condition of our composers How hard is their lot with our script, where the poor composers must handle about 600 letters instead of 150 in the Roman script. The technical and mechanical considerations therefore should take away much of our prejudice and would prompt us to move with the time-spirit of this scientific age.

I can say from personal experiences, how the Turks have got enormous advantages and rapid advances in the field of education by discarding the Arabic script and adopting

the Roman script. I talked with the educationists and journalists of Istanbul, where I had been recently, and they all spoke in one voice that this act of Kamal Ataturk had been the cause of rapid educational progress in that country.

Many may urge that our script is much superior to the Roman script, because of its phonetic and scientific planning according to vocal tones We are surely proud of our achievements in phonetics, but this phonetic language has been transliterated all these years by the great Orientalists and our languages will not suffer in the least because of adoption of the Roman script. If we accept a uniform system of transliteration, there would not be much difficulty and the use of special marks may also be reduced to the minimum

Practical expediency should guide us instead of prejudice and sentiment. The world to-day has become small International ideas and motives should be taken into consideration before we plunge ourselves to a new way of life. If we are going to change the existing script for Devnagri, why not for the world-alphabet the Roman script ?

No sensible man to-day shall belittle the importance of promotion of International amity and a common script is the surest and safest basis for it. Our sages have said that to the generous, the whole world is kith and kin and I fondly hope that this catholic world-view should point our attempts in the right direction. Let us not be afraid—we should accept the script of others, but we must spread our own ideals and culture through it, much better and in this way we shall obtain our rightful place in the federation of nations.

Divorce and Future India*

Our legislature has passed the law of divorce and as I understand from reports here in America that we have been very liberal, modern and advanced in the matter of separation. I am not going to challenge the law from the spiritual background. I do not wish to point out that the soul of India was essentially one of spiritual aspirations and obedience to the law of the spirit, which were regarded as superior to everything else. This spiritual heritage has outlived all the political changes through which India has passed.

The Greeks, the Huns, the Scythians, the Pathans, the Moguls and the British came in their turn, controlled the political machinery for the time being, but were never able to change the spiritual integrity of Hindu culture.

Free India has done otherwise, but I am sure that inspite of the law on the statute-book, the immortal Indian culture will save our people from the ruin, damnation and disaster of broken homes.

Let me tell my countrymen a few solid facts of the life here in America and let them judge for themselves. I had the advantage of sitting here with Judge Twain Michelsen of the superior court in the civic centre of California and hearing several cases which were tried by him.

*This was written in 1954 in America.

It is a fact which our advanced men and women must bear in mind that divorce is a painful and tragical emotional experience. It very often brings moral ruin to the husband and sometimes to the wife also. But not only ethical degeneration, it very often develops neurosis and nervous disorders. Because of the abnormal domestic relations here in America, very few people in America are happy. It is the richest country, the most developed country. It is full of initiative, full of movement and full of activities, but they bring on its back much strain and worry.

We must also consider the financial aspect of the situation. It impressed me while listening to the heart-rending cases of broken hearts how the family break-up is not only a social and moral disaster, but as one journalist said here in a newspaper that it is creating a whole new class of Americans—alimony paupers.

Let us make out a typical case. Mr John earns hundred dollars per week and he had a happy household with a loving wife and two children Two-third of his income goes to the wife and the children and he finds it very difficult to eke out a living with the remaining one third. What was decent for one household is not sufficient for one. The wife too is not happy too She also cannot maintain herself and the children with what she gets. Where there was joy and moon-light—there is now the dismal situation of a heavy struggle in the glaring midday sun. The parties are thus made paupers by the alimony money For getting the divorce, they had to spend a good deal of money as attorney fees. In alloting alimony, most of the judges try to do the best that can be done in the circumstances in each case, but each divorce not only breaks hearts but also breaks comfortable and peaceful living and the severed parties are to

face the bitter struggles of life, made weaker by the mental reactions of divorce.

The Americans are impulsive by nature. Most divorces are also impulsive, motivated by anger or a sex-fling. Divorce therefore is not only a moral mistake but a financial one also

The foolish husband who went to the court with rosy ideas of having a good time of it is soon disillusioned. Instead of a 'free' man about town, as he may have imagined, beset by beautiful young females, the husband faces the drudgery of a humdrum barren life, where for want of money, he cannot expect to take a woman out with him.

I had a talk with Mrs. Malone, one of the two inspectors of the court, whose duty is to find out the best arrangement for children in such cases of divorce. She looked smart and self confident and explained to me how these things are done. I asked her point-blank—"Mrs. Malone ! you are so wealthy. Each man has more than what he wants, then why there are so many divorce cases ?"

She was a bit non-plussed. Perhaps it wounded her national pride But she recovered herself in a second and said smilingly—"Drunkenness is a great cause but actually want—is the root cause."

"Want——?" I was just sceptic. She said in her beautiful voice.

"Yes, Dr. Das, you do not perhaps know the American wife's eagerness to have all the best things her neighbour has. So she goes on buying on credit. Ultimately she is heavy with debts The debts break the hearts in most cases than the problems of incompatibility, sexual differences and individual assertions.

While advising Alicia, a girl friend that she must marry soon, I told her the case of Mrs. Parker. Mrs. Parker says that she loves her husband, but still she can not live with her because of incompatibility of character."

In America there is too much freedom, too much individuality. No body wants to be guided by anybody. In marriage relation, there should be the give and take policy. If the husband and wife turn each in his own or her own way, there cannot be any unity—any coherent integral harmony in the family life.

The divorce-problem of America should be an eye opener to all lovers of India. To ape the innovations of the world, to try to be modern, we may cut assunder the roots of our culture.

We are sure and certain that the illumination we had in the past should illumine us in the future. The bright radiance of the galaxy of noble ladies, Sati, Sita and Savitri and others are undying and immortal beacon-lights to India.

Free India needs re-integration of her own spiritual culture The West is unhappy with all its machines, with all its motor cars, radios, television-sets We are poor but we had all these years the sweet repose of a sweet home. Let us not burn it.

———

What India needs to-day ?

While sitting in my room in San Francisco, the sunny city clustered around the blue-watered Sanfrancisco Bay, my mind wanders back to my home-land and here in this land of machines, while talking of our own spiritual culture and mysticism, one feels truly that we in India need more bread. We must look forward to our children living in the midst of plenty and prosperity and this can only be done by applying modern science to the problems of our needs India, it is true, has her teeming millions and the question is whether she can support all of them. My answer to all lovers of our country is that with modern science, this can be done.

Free India should be a democracy, where Governments elected by the people are bound in all honour and obligation to put an end to our age-long poverty with its age-long evils of hunger and preventable disease.

The first and foremost thing we must introduce into India is the birth-control movement. The rate in which population is increasing in India is too dangerous. Food production cannot keep pace with it. So the growth of population must be limited by birth-control. Whether we do it in the way of continence or through scientific appliances does not matter so much, but what matters is that we must control the enormous growth of population.

But along with this, we must try to have increased crop-yield through the development of agriculture. We must know the modern means of making large areas fertile in India which are now barren, but which were fertile once, by giving artificial fertilisers and preventing soil erosion.

In this case, there are still huge areas in India which are unproductive, which yield no kind of food. These should be cultivated. Modern man has learnt the art of making undeveloped land productive and we should follow in the footsteps of Japan and North America in introducing scientific system of cultivation

Our irrigation projects are good in their way and the opportunities offered by their new schemes should be fully utilised and for this, intelligent and cultivated young men should take to agriculture.

You hear very often in the papers how the deserts in India are stretching their hungry jaws, obliterating fields, destroying orchards and devouring green grass. The artesian wells drilled in Egypt and other places have showed the way to conquer desert lands and we should have now projects for the resurrection of the dead deserts.

We should also follow the methods adopted in Holland for increasing land by driving away tides. The Oceans are ready for man's use and we must keep abreast of the projects in other countries which are trying to win vast reserves of food, of water, of minerals and electric powers by conquering the seas. Let us not look with wonderful eyes on the vast expanse and hear its mysterious, deep voice but let us churn it once more with modern technology and much wealth will come to us.

We do not manage to save for human consumption the whole of food we grow in India. We are to be up against the many enemies that constantly diminish our returns The land itself is eaten by erosion, both of water and wind, Diseases strike at our plants and animals, ruining crops and decimating herds. They also drain away the man-power that is necessary for the production of food. Before and after we gather our harvests, parasites and predators grow at our granerıes and the last but not the least is our wastefulness.

Our people must know and learn that much food can be saved by taking precautıonery measures against all of them. Think of the monkey herds What great ravages they yearly do to our lovely crops. There is no meaning in allowing them free play Attempts should be made to kill most of them and drive the rest to jungles

Disease is not a mysterious visitation. Every attempt should be made by the popular Government to bring strength and health to our unhappy millions.

The wasting away of the land is a process whose causes are now known and it is within human power to take measures for their control. One of them is having more forests and our attention has been drawn to this much-needed factor.

Humanity is now armed with workable defences against all these enemies of production. The only question is whether we should merely sigh and mourn in our unhappy homes or take up scientific weapons against all these destructive forces

Complete river and valley development is one of the most potent instruments mankind can use to have abundance.

Of all nations, the United States is best equipped in the matter. We have such projects in India but I think that our enterprising and intelligent engineers should be sent to this country to learn efficiency and method.

There are attempts in this country to catch the wind-power. In the colder agriculture regions of India, which are usually windy, electricity generated by groups of wind-mills could be sent into wires laid permanently underground, where it would warm the soil The electrically heated soil will produce earlier crops

Masses of disease-stricken men and women constitute a serious problem to our healthy advancement but we must be more up and doing in our battle against disease We should employ modern methods and appliances. We should adopt the latest discoveries and give our heart and soul for the eradication of human and cattle disease.

But all over the vast expanse of our country, people must realise that sheer waste causes loss of food more than our enemies. Let any one think of our feasts, the method of our dinners and ponder how usually we can save, if we reduce the waste.

We must further learn the process of conversion of waste products into edible food.

But this is not all, we must make our land give us more to eat India's production per acre is only half of that of China and one-fourth that of Japan, yet our land, on the whole is better than that of either. Our farmers must realise that man is no longer a helpless creature, who must have only what nature gives. Man is wise enough to control the sources of his livelihood and he can create abundance if he will.

Are we not going to do so in India? We must if we mean to live decently. Man can now grow two blades of grass where there was but one before. Here in America, nature has been forced to yield six and seven heads of wheat on a single stalk. We can have them in India.

We must usher in a totally new era in the history of India We must blot out ignorance and idleness. We must try to have the full blossoming of the gigantic creative genius that is in man and fight for bringing abundance to the starving millions. Let us be strong. Let us have faith in a glorious future to India. The knowledge, the technical skill and the physical equipment now available are sufficient to change the face of India. We must solve the riddle of the sphinx. We must double and treble the yield from our cultivated land.

Let our young hopefuls be scientifically minded. Let them learn technical skill and technique of modern cultivation and then go back from the crowed cities and the poorly paid services to the lap of mother Nature and ask her to be bountiful

If we do that, then there is no cause for despair A bright future awaits India. We have enough of idle philosophising and useless metaphysics. What India needs today is more and more bread and to our groups of thousand and one religious sects, I can only repeat the words of the Upanishads that the goal can never be reached by one who is weak. Food is the primary source of strength, so let us worship *Anna-brahma* for the present and if we do that, *Ananda-brahma* will come to our door.

Interdependence

All through this book, I have tried my best to prove the importance of a religious view of the world, of man and of society from the Indian standpoint. I have further tried to show how the problems of modern economic and political systems should change for the better, if we can accept the values which the Rishis of India preached. Religious insights not only give goals of cultures but also provide criteria of judgment and analysis The Indian conceptions of soul and love express the deepest aspirations of humanity.

But that does not mean and should not mean that equal ideals of equality, liberty and fraternity should not spring up elsewhere in the world. I met Otto Todd Mallery, chairman of the Interdependence council in a hotel near Gramercy Park in New York, on the 1st December, 1954 and was glad to find that the eternal soul of India was speaking through him.

He was an old man bordering on eighty but he looked bright and brilliant.

His face was beaming with joy. I had friendly conversation with him for about half an hour.

It was a day with beautiful sunshine Over a bottle of cocacola,I heard with rapt attention the dreams of that youthful man in an old and infirm body.

His work is a pioneer work on world-fellowship and I feet that his warmth of feeling is catching. He has a charming way of saying things. He asked the question—"Nations can live in peace or die, which shall it be ?"

I told him that I had been going round the world, preaching international amity. India does not want war—She advocates peace and plenty, sweetness and culture.

He seemed to be pleased and said in his dreamy fashion :-
"What is needed is a change of the heart—not of the nations but of the individuals."

I looked up to him There was much in common between him and the preacher of the moral Rearmament ideal. The fate of humanity depends upon the feelings of individuals towards one another. His stress is on the moral and spiritual upliftment of individuals rather than of Governments The common interests which unite men of different climates and of different ideals are stronger than the artificial barriers, inspired by Governments which tend to keep them apart.

"We must spread a deeper , understanding of interdependence everywhere—" he spoke with joy and a proud heart.

"That is a bright idea—" I rejoined.

"Yea, that is, but who is going to make it a success—you and me, my friend ?"

"Certainly. We must fight for the noble ideal "

He took up my hands and clasped them with lively interest and said with a jubilant expectancy—"would you gladly work for it ?"

',Yes, gladly. Perhaps when the trurh is known, it will be surely appreciated."

"Thank you Dr. Das—spread the message in India and I shall be glad if you join our camp."

His persuasive eloquence won me over and I at once became a member. The ideals behind this international organization for world-peace are noble and heroic

A member of this organization should feel that though he is only one, still he is one Though he can not do everything, he can do something. What he can do, he ought to do and what he ought to do, he will do One can profitably compare with this faith the advice given by our own poet in one of his immortal patriotic poems :-

"If none listens to thy appeal, then walk alone.
Walk alone, move alone, in thy lonesome way
If nobody speak, O thou wretched one
If everybody turns his face, if all are fearful,
Then to yours heart's content
Sing alone, sing alone what thou wishest to say.
If every body goes back, O thou unhappy toiler !
If none looks you up, when thou traversest the lone way,
Then the thorn on the road
Thou shouds't crush with thy own sore feet
If none lights the way, O thou luckless way-farer !
If in the dark night in rain and storm, they bar their doors,
Then with the fire of thunder,
Thou shouldst glow alone burning thy ribs assunder.

The declaration of Interdependence is intended to give individuals a direction of movement and a sense of responsible participation in a world-wide fellowship.

No one, no people can stand alone. They should unite in partnership to avoid conflicts. Through co-operative efforts human beings should stand together in creative faiths that a free and peaceful world is possible by human efforts in love.

We must affirm all over the globe that men are all members of one another, They are interdependent. The needs of all are rightful and legal claims on the community as a whole We should envelope the whole world with God and then enjoy whatever goods or talents we possess as stewards of God. Wealth belongs to none, so do not hanker after it. It you cease to covet wealth, there will be free and equal distribution of wealth, which will ensure peace and happiness.

Faith moves mountains Members who believe in Interdependence should stand for progress and good life The first creed is of equality.

We should exercise reverence for life and human dignity, abolish racial barriers and repudiate all doctrines of supposed superiority based on birth.

This creed should not be a mere Utopian ideal which we all admire but none practise in life This must be a philosophy which is followed in actual practice. When there is a concrete unity of theory and practice, there is every chance of real spiritual brotherhood, becoming an integral factor in human life.

The second creed is tolerence We must foster mutual understanding and respect, for one another's belief and cultural values The gates of truth are many and varied.

One feels a desire to compare this with our catholic attitude. All paths lead to Him—that had been the message of all the great teachers of India. When you rise up to the

summit, you will find that all differences are apparent—in reality there is only unity in the manifold variety.

The third creed is freedom. We must uphold freedom to think, to read, to listen, to look and to assemble. Great ideas are the bed-rock of civilization and accordingly we should always have open minds and give unlimited scope for free discussions.

We must create fair fields for everybody. This is the fourth creed We should increase the opportunity to unfold creative talents, to realise noble dreams and enjoy fruitful unthreatened lives.

The Indian conception of spiritual life is not antagonistic to achievements in the material world We should bear in mind that we all have to live our lives in and through the physical body and in this physical earth An aspirant who neglects the mundane and igrores the physical and concentrates all his attention and endeavour on things spiritual is really defeating his own ends. What we must achieve, we must do so, on this physical globe

The fifth objective is to promote physical and moral health of all people and raise standards of living throughout the world What is needed is the creation of a spirit of co.operation among the nations so that, despite differences in economic life and out look, they can work together in a feeling of neighbourliness for the promotion of the common goal By human efforts, we can build up a world-economy which is just, orderly, free, productive and fraternal.

The last creed is faith in spiritual power We shall not place reliance in military power. Wars are world-disasters and they must cease for all times to come We should

therefore desire to help one another to mount step by step towards the high summits of human aspirations

The restaurant was full of men who were talking violently. The radio were going full blast, while from the street side were frequent automobile horns In the midst of that noise and hub-bub, the old man spoke with a serene calmness :— 'We are going to voice the longings of all people for peace, freedom, justice and security, with equeal rights for all and special privileges for none '

My critical readers may say that I am hiding from reality. He may say that dreaming is easy but life is hard The dreamer forgets the limitations of human nature and the shape of the world he lives in. There is some force in this criticism.

But on that sunny day and in that atmosphere I believed in all Otto Tod Mallery told me with his burning faith To my sceptic readers, I may sav with some amount of personal conviction 'yes it does work ! It brings to you a new renovation—a new integration so that you get contentment of mind and spirit. It is far superior to the beaten track of the ordinary type of life with its wild pursuit of money and sensationalism If it does not bring to your door, prosperity and worldly success, it brings something far more worth-while, the bliss of true life—real happiness in living

I still cherish the memory of that pleasant interview. I am not sure whether the idea of mutual aid will succede in the political world. Whether wars will go for ever but there is something of beauty in this noble dream which can change you and your life and bring sweetness and culture to your door

It is a move towards equality, fraternity and liberty the great ideals which was behind the French Revolution.

It has failed in the past, but that is no reason for despair. Faith is like the bird that feels the coming light and sings when the dawn is still dark

There is still gloom all over the world but imaginative men like Mr. Mallery are harbingers of that new dawn which is coming with bright radiance and illuminating hope. The question is whether we are going to join and make a world-wide flow of love and joy

The answer must be in the affirnative. I shall speak with the poet :-

Come really again, boys ! We must not resign,
But each storm we encounter let's nobly brave,
It is better to perish at liberty's shrine,
And the last drop of blood in her alters to lave.
Oh ! yes it is better, far better to die,
In a glorious cause than to pine beneath chains,
For the heroes that fall, ther's a tear and a sigh,
Whilst a kindred on the earth there remains

If we rally and fight, the poet's dream will be realised in our own lives. The past history of mankind has been a nightmare in which many suffered and the few rode their cars over their bodies. But now that knowledge is increasing, the real truth is felt by every soul, so that one world and one humanity will become a reality to morrow, if not to-day.

Peace and Power

Bright and brilliant youngmen, the path of life is before you. You yourselves are to make what you wish to have in life If you desire peace of mind, improved health and over-flowing energy, robust optimism, a successful career and a life full of joy and bliss, you can have it.

The everv day problems of life seem too big for you You feel a sense of defeat, but do you know, my youthful friends that there are techniques which may lead you to peace and power, plenty and beauty. Yes, believe in yourself Have faith in your capacities. You have heard that faith *moves mountains* It is *true—absolutely true.* Read the lives of great men and successful men and you would learn that each and every one of them had that self-confidence without which they could not have been successful or happy

Give up your inferiority complex and develop creative faith. Remember and repeat the affirmation you read in the Gita,—"Ascend with the help of your own self, do not humiliate yourself, eliminate your inferiority complex, which is another name for fear and profound self-doubt Know verily that you are your own friend, and you are your own enemy" 6 5.

The greatest secret of success is the tremendous faith in yourself. Have powerful and vital faith. Utilize your

dynamic faith for the release of powers that can work wonders. Miracles happen even to-day but there is a law, there is a procedure for its happening

Would you not study this procedure and by practice gain perfection therein. The rules are simple and workable but you must cling to them with never-failing faith and dogged tenacity.

If you analyse your own mind, you are very likely to find that your are saturated with inferiority and you lack confidence Drive away thoughts of insecurity and inadequacy, which have made a permanent residence in your mind and in their place, put in confident thoughts This is the method of auto-suggestion Build up feelings of self-confidence by giving suggestions to your sub-conscious mind that you are able, that you have the necessary abilities, that you are destined for victory Such positive and bright thoughts recreate your mind. When you work with this wonderful plan, nothing remains impossible to you

Do you know the hymn that every Hindu is to recite in the early morning Perhaps you do not know or even if you know, you have never realised its infinite possibilities Affirm with me, repeat with me this hymn—this mantra of sure success

"I am God—the ever-bright one—I am none other than this effulgent source of light and sweetness I am the great, the almighty, the all-powerful. Defeat and despondency are not mine. I am in essence, Existence, consciousness and Bliss, I am ever free and sit for-ever in my glory"

These are dynamic concepts, having more power than is possessed by the atomic energy. It is a sure panacea for your lack of confidence The thought that God is with you and helping you, brings mighty forces to your aid.

God is the source of all powers Draw from that never-failing source. Feel the continual presence of the Higher Power, their life-renewing and life-invigorating energy is always available to you, it is beyond but resident within yourself

Do you know the story in the Kenopanishad. Brahma defeated the demons, but the Gods began to boast of their own triumph So He appeared before them but they did not know His magnificence The Gods asked Agni to go and enquire

Agni approached Him and He asked Agni—"who are you"
"I am called Agni—the all-knower"
"What can you do"
"I can burn all that is in this universe"—answered Agni.
Brahma put a blade of straw before him and said "Burn it"
Agni tried his best but failed

Other Gods tried and ultimately all of them learnt that their powers are derivative, all energy come out of Brahma.

Realise, my friends ! that the Lord, the everlasting God giveth power to the faint, increaseth the strength of the weak Wait upon that Lord and you shall renew your strength, you shall mount up with wings as eagles. Do whatever you wish, you shall not be weary, work as hard as you like, you shall not faint.

This is the secret I wish to divulge to you. Fear not, this power is always available to you Open your minds to it, it will rush in like a flood. It will come to you any time under any circumstances or in any condition. Look upon this mighty inflow of power, its force is limitless, it will drive away sickness and sorrow, defeat and despair, weakness and worry, fear and fret, hate and heat. It has a strange uplifting force It will refresh you and restrengthen

you It will bring health and happiness truth and goodness, beauty and healing balm. Once you accept this spiritual force, there is no problem that baffles you, no defeat that you cannot overcome and no malady that you cannot cure.

Therefore do not build up obstacles in your imagination. God is in His own place and all is well with the world, Fear inflates things. Banish fear thoughts, kill your defeat obsessions Stamp indelibly on your mind the picture of your success, victory and glory.

Think health and have health, think success and have success As you desire, so you get Be active and be positive. Never think of failure, never doubt that you have peace prosperity and power. Mind always tries to complete what it pictures. So always have courage Positive thoughts create positive things They conquer who believe they can.

But before you can have power, have the life of inner peace and harmony. A life without stress is the store-house of energy, it radiates courage and magnetism. A peaceful mind generates all powers All things pass away. The world is fleeting God alone is sufficient, God alone is permanent in this world of perpetual flux.

Be serene, be tranquil. Eliminate from your talk and thought all negative ideas, for they produce inward tension and annoyance.

Daily silence is a great help. Practise absolute quiet for an hour or so every day. In that inactive leisure, listen for the deepest sounds of harmony and beauty that come out of profound silence.

Prayer is another antidote to worry. Ask for the light and light will come to you. Knock the door and it will open. When we pray to God, we send vibrations of love and help-

fulness, through which He causes to produce the good things prayed for.

Let us be spiritually receptive. God understands everything so ray in your own words. Visualize His presence and say what is in your mind. God's love and protection surrounds you, so surrender yourself whole-heartedly to Him. Expect the best and you will get it.

Banish all doubt, it closes the floor of grace. Faith opens it. The power of faith is so tremendous that Almighty God can do anything if we only let Him channel this power through our minds.

Stop all fret and fever. God will keep us in perfect place if we yield ourselves to Him.

Last but not the least, cultivate Love. Where love is, God is Let us live simply expecting nothing but giving as much as we can. Fill your life with love Practise love Scatter Sunshine in the darkness of the daily struggles. Forget self and live for others If you do so, God will give you a new life The life of love and light will bubble up in an irrepressible effervescence. If you want real, unalloyed happiness, just dive deep into the ocean of love

Resentment, hate, grudge, ill-will, jealousy, vindictiveness are attitudes which produce ill-health in body and mind. Empty your mind of all these evil thoughts and get rid of them without delay If you do so, the healing peace of love will dawn in your mind.

If you are bent on remaking your life, fill your mind with fresh, new creative thoughts of faith, love and goodness The feeling of love attacks each difficulty with an optimistic attitude and a sure confidence that it will work out right and the result is that the magic touch of faith alters everything

Love visuzlizes achievement and Power. In the altitude of Love, inspirations rise from their depths and God's principles work within you.

The law of love is an amazing one, It substitutes new vital dynamic faith-thoughts in place of the old, dead and unhealthy thoughts and thereby creates wonderful things for you. Love God and envelop everything in this universe with that deep and profound love and if you do so. He will be at your door. Religion is not a thing of mystery. It is a lamp that burns slowly to give you peace and power here in this earth. Accept therefore the religion of love and peace

Relax yourself. Do everything more slowly less hectically and without pressure. God never hurries, never gets excited He just works slowly and makes no noise but does everything in His good time neatly and beautifully. The burden of the world is not on your head—the helmsman is there to right every wrong and to take you across the ferry of life There is therefore absolutely no reason for your hectic speed, for vour stress and strain

Keep youiself in tune with the Infinite—that is all you know and need to know on earth In the game of life, the loving human being is to remain in constant touch with the Source of Infinite Power, Infinite Grace and Infinite Bliss. If a man does so, he recreates himself continuously by being attached to a continual flow of force that emanates from God through the individual and back to God for renewal

This connecting link is Love. Loose yourself in love. It will give you a deep spiritual experience, so that you will radiate joy and happiness all around you The more you do so, the more love you will get. The basic principle, therefore, of success, of peace and power, of health and harmony is a very simple thing—Love. Therefore have love and more love.

The Future

Our journey is at end. We have traversed a vast field of study from the hoary antiquity down to our present times. The subject is so deep that completion or perfection is beyond the capacity of human ability. Inadequate and incomplete as our attempt must be, still it may give the readers the quintessence of Indian culture. How far I have succeeded in my humble endeavour, it is for my kind readers to judge. The soul of India lies in its search for the Soul and my thesis in the present book has been to unravel that India in her manysided glory and in her varied attainments has always been true to the Truth of the Soul. The highest happiness, blessedness and bliss come on our knowledge of the soul. We must, therefore, know the Soul and we must so adjust our lives, so tune them that there is gradual revealion of the Soul.

But this life in the spirit is no life of negation. It is no life of isolation but an active participation in the creative joy of sleepless work and service The world is weary and eagerly awaits for this inner illumination. It is the mission of India to radiate the noble teachings of her Rishis amongst the people of the world. This divine task of India must be fulfilled under the cosmic Law of the spiritual kingdom. I have striven my best to unravel this message and prepare ourselves heart and soul in this spiritual uplift and cosmic development But one who looks round cannot but be despon-

dent. Independence has brought an all-round degeneration in our national character. Power has come all on a sudden and it has corrupted our leaders. Discipline is gone. The noblest ideals of the race, Truth and Sacrifice are forgotten in a mad pursuit after worldly pomp and power. Wherever you turn, wherever you go, you see a world of darkness and shadows.

The partition of India has been the greatest sacrilege on the part of the Congress leaders No sin is lost in this world This outrage was beyond the dream of even Lord Wavell. Mahatma Gandhi did not accept it from his heart. He was forced to accede to it by the pressure of his so-called followers. The heaven-born Leader, Netaji Subhas was not destined to reach India with his army of liberation. As a result, we have a divided India and the outlook is gloomy in the extreme and the prospects most discouraging.

Sefishness and greed now rule India. Corruption is everywhere. Inefficiency is the order of the day. Public and private life is polluted Indian culture is decadent Provincialism runs high. Gone is justice and gone is discipline A chaos is ahead. A revolution will soon be at our door.

But if winter comes, can spring be far behind ? We who are believers know that the dawn is arising and the spell of darkness must vanish. Though our present journey is be set with many pitfalls, we are sure to wade through and reach the other shore of victory.

We must conclnde with a note of hope. A bright future awaits us. In agony the people are crying. Such lamentations are necessary. "Why dost thou seek to smite us, O India ?" That was the cry in the Vedic age. Progress is through suffering and death. Illumination and largeness will follow in the wake of the march of the evil Vast is the wisdom of Mother India. All the sin that we have done against her, calls for expiation and penance.

Shall we shrink from our duty or shall we go forward in our onward journey, fighting against our will, just like Arjuna in the battlefield of the Kurukshetra? Yes, we must take part in the battle. We must give a deadly blow to the forces of defeatism and doubt and go forward. We must forge ahead and obtain light and splendour. During her past history, India has been overwhelmed again and again, but her spirit was never conquered, She has outlived tumultuous ages and has remained steady in her pursuit of Immortality

The nightmare of the present will be over soon. History will forget the temporary triumph of little minds. The present era of frustration and humilation will vanish and India must find herself Neheru and the Congress leaders have proved failures as rulers and administrators A new set of leaders must arise and the first and foremost thing they must do is to unite India. The fundamental unity of India is not only geographical and political, but also cultural and integral. The parting kick of the British was both a snare and an insult. The renascent India must rise over the lure and stand high in her lone grandeur and mighty solemnity. Our culture and traditions must lead the way to the new regenaration. We must take our rightful place in the federation of the world. We shall welcome and absorb other cultures as we did in the past but we must do so, rooted on our own past and anchored on our undying culture.

It is an age of Internationalisim. The prayer of Rishi Sanbanana is no longer an imagination but a solid reality. The world must go together and speak together. There should be one assembly—one mind and one sacrifice. But what is our goal to-day?

We must be interested in this world, in this life here on Earth and must struggle hard for the birth of an enlightened

humanity, rich and powerful, strong and active. But India will not forget that the visible world is not all—it is touching continually the invisible world of Divinity. Sree Aurobinda, the latest seer of India has striven hard for the birth of the Superman and for bringing Divinity to the door of man. It is no new prayer. The Divine seer in the Rigveda prays for that illumination and upward voyaging. "Let the blissful love of the Gods—the effulgent and righteous Gods be ours. On us descend the grace and bounty of the Divine lights and Seers We want unity with that source of the Truth, the Bliss, the Right and the Infinity in deep companionship. Let us have a new life of wide dimensions—a new seeing of all things, a new moulding of thought, so that we may live in harmony and joy."

The future is for this Divine Descent. Beyond the limits is our journey in beauty and perfection. Much of this is veiled in mystic darkness but still the first flash of the dawn is there. Let us sing in joy and whole-hearted glee with the Vedic bard :- "Arise, life and force have come to us, the darkness has departed and the Light arrives'.

In years ahead, India must spread this light and shall proclaim to the world her gospel of hope and activity. Out of this evil dream of pain and suffering, human mind must achieve infinite consciousness. With the dawn of this truth will dawn the Bliss or Ananda and in this luminous vastness, man will have the Largeness of Godhead. The animal man will become the God-man and who is not going to work for this power and plentitude ? "O ye sons of Immortality, arise and awake and have your alloted boons of Love and Light."

Our culture has been dynamic and varied. In the midst of its variety, the only principle which distinguishes it is that

it holds us firm together and leads us to our best development. This culture will assert itself.

For the time being, we have rejected it and have turned out to be beasts My critics may point out that we have gained strength and wealth. Yes, this advance, this achievement may seem alluring from an external and material point of view. But judged by our eternal verities, this rise is worse than death from the spiritual point of view. As our scriptures say—"Through evil, a man prospers, attains what appears desirable, defeats enemies, but in the long run perishes at the root"

Let us therefore give up the mad pursuit—give up greed and vanity Let Love and Harmony once more be our guides and let us soar aloft with hopes that never perish.

But to come to practical realities from imaginative heights and abstract aspirations, the future must wipe out the caste system from our social life. In the long panorama of India's history, caste has played its part, but we must unhesitatingly part with it without in the least breaking the continuity of our national tradition and culture In the united and unified India, there should only be Indians.

Secondly, there should be no more any idol-worship A rational spirit of enquiry, an accquaintance with the true religion of India will surely convince my countrymen of the irrationalism of idol-worship. It has been the cause of our mental stupor and stagnation. Our temples should be converted into study-halls of our noble scriptures. We must awake with an abounding vitality without the burdens and complexes of our old prejudices and superstitions.

Thirdly, the whole force and power of our body politic should be concentrated to raise the whole level of our people by spreading free and compulsory education. Our leaders in the past used to attack the alien Britishers for their inattention to Education. But the picture is not changed, now we are free. The dumb mute millions are as blind as they were before. We cannot and should not fall behind in the march of science and technology and for that, universal and compulsory education is the first requisite.

Fourthly, in order to transform the country with amazing speed and release the dormant ability and energy of the masses, we must establish a real democracy in place of the present masked autocracy and oligarchy. We must give equal opportunities for all and there should be no barrier of any sort With our faith in the divinity of man, we cannot and should not tolerate any kind of privilege, any nepotism or any favouritism

Fifthly, real equality can come with an economic system which fits in with it and encourages it. Free growth of talent and capacity can be had only where hunger and poverty does not crush the sense of dignity and self-reliance The full development of human personality is possible only where the material forces of production, of science aud industry are for the benefit of all We must therefore have at the earliest opportunity a socialist state in India in place of the modern Government which is being controlled at present by the wire-pulling of the merchant princes and capitalists.

Sixthly, India must play her part well in Geo-politics. There should be intimate co-operation between us and the people of the other countries of the world. We are in favour of peace and love, co-operation and amity and we should make our influence felt by our courageous stand against all aggression

and by our noble idealism to raise humanity ever to greater freedom and higher achievements

Seventhly and lastly, it is the destiny of India to lead the world to the heaven of beauty and bliss. We must preach our integral vision of life for the acceptance by all our brothers and sisters of the world. Our outlook is vast and wide and all-comprehensive. It embraces in its fold the past and the present -with all their heights and depths and look with hope and peace towards the future. It accepts the scientific temper and approach and combines it with mystic delight and spiritual blessedness. We shall proclaim the divine loveliness of the world and shall ask our fellow-men to move onward and onward in the exciting adventure of fresh and new discoveries. Each and every one of us should have a rebirth here in this world—a rebirth in the fullness and perfection of Divinity.

Mother India

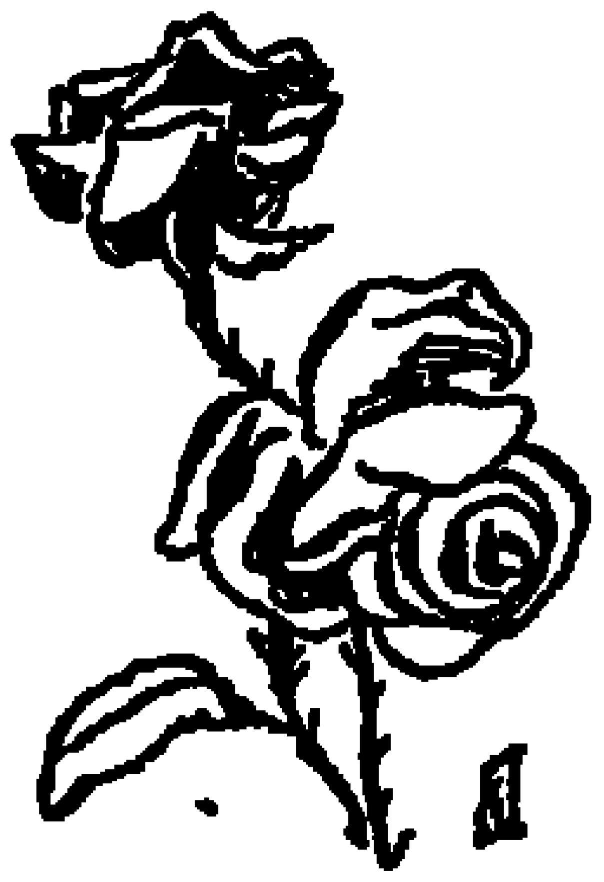
Mother India ! The land so sweet and nice
I bow to thee.

Mother India ! the land of song and sacrifice
I bow to thee.

Mother India ! the land of seers and sages,
I bow to thee.

Mother India ! ever new through the ages,
I bow to thee.

THE END



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